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THE FUTURE
OF THE
-Balkan States,-

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

THE Greco-Turkish war, just brought to a close, following upon the atrocities recently perpetrated by the Turks upon the defenceless Armenians, brings the never-ending Eastern Question, once more before the attention of the civilized world. What shall be done with the Turk, is a problem that no one seems able to solve. It is, indeed, heart-rending to observe the utter inability of the European Powers to ameliorate, in any degree, the wretched condition of countless human beings, groaning under the Turkish yoke. To what shall we attribute this seeming impotence, on the part of the mighty nations of Christendom, to rescue the unfortunate victims of Turkish misrule?

There can be but one answer to this pertinent question. We must ascribe it chiefly to the insatiable greed of the governments, which are immediately concerned with the solution of the Eastern Question. It is true that, now and then, they do forward a note of warning to the Sublime Porte; but they are seldom, if ever, ready to en-

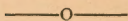
force this. The Sultan, being aware of their indecision, allows the atrocities to continue as before. When in the year 1877, Russia fought for the liberation of the oppressed people in European Turkey, and the Sultan was forced to subscribe to the provisions of the treaty of St. Stephano, England stepped in, and demanded the restoration of the *statu quo ante*. Thus, by the treaty of Berlin, the good work for which Russia had sacrificed over one hundred thousand men, was completely frustrated. And now that public opinion in England seems to be aroused, and the English government seems disposed to take decisive action, in consequence of the horrible atrocities in Armenia, Russia interposes and demands the maintenance of the *statu quo ante*; and so the Turks are allowed to pursue their iniquitous course with impunity. Whatever may be the excuses of the leading statesmen of Europe for the indifference of their respective governments, it is clear to all thoughtful men that their mutual jealousies are chiefly responsible for the continued barbarities in the Turkish domains.

It is encouraging to note that some public spirited men, like Edward Freeman, and Emile de Laveleye, and Mr. Gladstone, have been quite outspoken in their denunciation of the, so-called, European diplomacy, for its criminal inaction with

reference to the emancipation of the subject peoples in Turkey. There are others again, who, either from sentimental considerations, or from want of reliable information, are very lavish in their praise of the Sultan and his government. It is our aim to speak more particularly from the standpoint of the oppressed people, whose sufferings it has been our misfortune to share and witness. Furthermore, the fact that, for more than fifteen years we were thrown among the various classes inhabiting this region, has enabled us to study more advantageously existing relations between these dependent peoples in their social, religious and ethnological aspects.

It will devolve upon us, therefore, to discuss the subject: "The Future of the Balkan States," in its political rather than historical bearing, excepting in so far as "history is the politics of the past, and politics the history of the present."

PART I.



THE PROBLEM OF TURKISH DOMINATION IN EUROPE.



WHAT the Turkish rule in Europe is doomed to a speedy termination, no one, who is more or less conversant with political affairs, will doubt for a moment. The Ottoman power in the Balkan peninsula would have been overthrown before this time, had it not been for the divergent views, as to its proper apportionment among the interested nations.

Whatever plans it may be necessary to devise for the ultimate solution of the difficulty, one thing is universally conceded, viz., the impending dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.



CHAPTER I.

THE ENEMIES OF EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION.

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THERE is nothing unique in the fact that the Turks invaded Europe, that they took possession of the Balkan peninsula, and, finally, that they have ruled over vanquished peoples. We have a striking parallel in the immigration of the Huns and their subsequent settlement in Hungary; yet, we cannot regard the Hungarians as intruders, in the sense in which the Ottoman Turks have always been so considered. What, then, are the distinguishing characteristics of the Turks and the Huns? We observe, in the first place, that both races are of Touranian descent; that both peoples pressed forward into more hospitable regions, and by the untiring use of their swords, conquered less warlike communities; that the Turks and the Hungarians alike, entered Europe as barbarians: nevertheless, to-day we regard the Hungarians as a civilized nation, while the Turks, on the contrary, remain just as barbarous as they were

five hundred years ago, when they first overran the Balkan States.

It is quite plain, therefore, that while racial affiliations do influence the habits of nations to some extent, they do not, in any large degree, fix their civilization. Thus we find that, though the Huns were of Touranian extraction, in due time they adapted themselves to the surrounding civilization, and became members of the European family. Unfortunately it has not been so with the Turks. They remain strangers and intruders upon the European continent still; for, instead of adjusting themselves to its requirements, they have only succeeded in usurping a place within it. The ancient historic provinces of Eastern Europe, once noted for their wealth and culture, are to-day in a state of utter poverty and desolation, very largely through the blighting influence of the Turks.

How shall we explain, then, this marked distinction between the Hun and the Turk? Why is it that the former has become a thorough European, while the latter remains a barbarian still? The proper answer to this important question is to be found in the fact that the Turk was a Mohammedan when he entered Europe, while the Hun was a pagan.

The Turk, as a tartar, was possessed of many

objectionable traits. He was known to depend upon animals to supply his physical wants. On the horse, particularly, he placed his highest reliance to aid him in the acquisition of the necessities of life. The horse would transport him and his family from one place to another. His polity consisted in the brutal application of force.

The Turk, as a Mohammedan, is a very different being. His religion has exerted a marvelous influence in the formation of his character; for it dictates his actions, not merely in matters pertaining to his spiritual welfare, but also in all the relations of life. Mohammedanism, therefore, is directly responsible for the unfitness of the Turk to participate in the councils of the European nations.

At this juncture it may be well to point out wherein Mohammedanism has affected the Turk in a way that renders him a menace to the peace of Europe. We must place Mohammedan intolerance of other faiths as the greatest cause for the incessant strife that is going on between Turks and the so called infidels; all non-Mohammedans being classed as infidels, "giaours," by the blind followers of the Prophet of Mecca.

The Koran teaches its adherents to fight the infidels until they are completely subdued. If an infidel persists in refusing to accept the faith of

Islam, he is usually given the choice of either paying tribute, becoming a subject (slave), or losing his life even; it all depends upon the peculiar whims of the commander at the time of his surrender.

It will be seen that a profession of Mohammedanism carries with it an implicit obligation to humiliate and persecute "infidels" wherever they may be found. This aggressive attitude, once infused into the minds of Mussulmans, makes them resolute soldiers, ever ready for new conquests, new depredations. This spirit explains, in part at least, the rapid extension of the Ottoman power throughout Asia Minor and, later on, all over Eastern Europe. But, however extensive their domain, however numerous their military exploits, their highest ideal is yet to be attained. It consists in the ultimate subjugation of all "infidel" countries.

Not satisfied with their triumphs in Asia, the Ottoman Turks marched westward with an irresistible impulse, until, finally, they crossed over into the bounds of Europe. Great and flourishing nations fell before the advancing tide of these Mohammedan hordes. Under Soleyman, the Turks passed into Europe, and in less than sixty years, became the undisputed masters of the entire Balkan peninsula. In 1683 they threatened

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even the very gates of Vienna. Had they been successful there, who can foretell what might have been the history of Europe during the last three hundred years?

There are other instances of migratory hordes conquering various portions of Europe; but in all such cases they settled down ultimately, either assimilating the conquered races or being assimilated by them. It was under similar circumstances that the Bulgarians, in 660 A. D., crossed the Danube and subdued the inhabitants of Moesia and Thrace, settling down to live among the Slavs. They adopted their language, and their mode of living, and became one people with them. On the other hand, the Turks would not amalgamate with the conquered races, so long as these refused to embrace the Mohammedan faith; consequently, to this very day, the Turks remain strangers to European usages and civilization.

It will be remembered that the Franks have given their name to France, in the same way in which the Turks have given their name to Turkey; but while the Franks have become one with the people of France, the Turks are still foreigners to the people of Turkey.

Military exploits, be it said, constitute of necessity the chief object in the life of a full-fledged Moslem; since it is his supreme duty to propagate

his faith, not by moral suasion and diplomacy only, but also through the most violent methods may be at his disposal. The Turk does not esteem it his duty to convert the infidel. He would either force him to accept Mohammedanism or, else, he would crush him down. As a rule, he dislikes to cultivate the soil; neither does he wish to engage in peaceful pursuits, unless compelled to do so by stress of circumstances.

Moreover, he is himself conscious that European Turkey is not and can not be the land of his people. This feeling lingers with him to the present day. He prefers to be buried on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, ever mindful of the fact that he is nothing but an intruder within the borders of the European continent.



CHAPTER II.

TURKISH MISGOVERNMENT.

WE have already alluded to the invariable practice, in vogue among Mohammedans, to refrain from all unnecessary intercourse with Christians, lest, as such, they should be defiled in some way. The Mohammedan will not confer upon a Christian such privileges as he himself enjoys; neither will he concede to him the ordinary rights of a citizen. The "infidel" cannot occupy any important position in the government; and, stranger still, he is debarred from enlisting as a common soldier in the army. The entire state machinery is under the absolute control of the Turks. The subject races of Turkey cannot think of asking such rights as are accorded to the humblest citizens of Western Europe. No intermarriage between a Turk and a Christian is possible, unless there be an abnegation of faith on the part of one of the contracting parties. Any Mohammedan daring to renounce his faith is liable to be killed at the hands of his co-religionists for having presumed to do so. Besides the Koran expressly prohibits any dealings

between believers and unbelievers that would bring them together, on a basis of equality; consequently, the organization of a strong, harmonious government, under the Turks, becomes utterly impossible. So long as the Turk adheres to the tenets of Mohammedanism, the subject races will look upon him as a tyrant, not a fellow-citizen. The unswerving purpose of every Christian subject must always be to deliver himself from his oppressor, as soon as an opportunity presents itself. It would seem that the Turk will never cease to believe himself fore-ordained of the Prophet to rule over the entire universe. The world is created to subserve his baser appetites. Why should he work for his daily bread when he can exact it from his "infidel" neighbor by force and intimidation? It becomes obvious, therefore, that so long as the Turk looks down upon his Christian neighbor, there can be no friendliness between them, but hatred and strife only.

The fact also that no Mohammedan countries ever offer their subjects races, what may be called, a fair government for the administration of justice, remains a constant source of discontent among the subject people. All the nations in Europe, except Russia, have adopted some form of a constitution. The Sultan of Turkey will not grant constitutional

rights to the Mussulmans themselves, let alone the Christian inhabitants. In dealing with Christians, the Turks in Europe most generally apply the rule of force, and not that of law. What would we think of the governments of Europe if they were to make the Gospel the sole administrative law, as we find the Koran to be in Mohammedan countries? It is true that the Sultan is acknowledged to be supreme in all matters pertaining to the state; but, as the successor of the Prophet, he is also bound to conform his mandates to the precepts of the Koran; otherwise he would be deposed. The testimony of a Christian against a Mohammedan is not legally valid; neither could he expect at the hands of Turkish magistrates the same protection which is accorded a Mohammedan in a Christian country. There are a number of instances of Christians in Turkey, who have been put to death, simply because they have dared to demand their rights through judicial channels.

Like the ancient Medes and Persians, the Turks are averse to any changes in their laws or their form of government. As they derive their instruction in the political sciences, almost exclusively, from Persian and Arabic sources, it is easy to see why their institutions are so vastly different from those of the other European countries. The latter have shared the common inheritance of the

old Greek and Roman civilizations. This cannot be said of the Turks, who, although ruling within Constantinople, for ages the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, remain to this day, aliens to European culture and methods.

There is another gulf of separation between Turks and Christians in the fact that all the governments of Europe are national, whereas, the Turkish government is theocratic. The Sultan, by virtue of the Caliphate, is the sovereign of the state. In the conduct of public affairs, the wishes of the people, whether Christian or Mohammedan, are not necessarily consulted. It will be noticed that, in speaking of the Turks, we were careful not to call them a nation; since the rôle, which they have played in European history, has not been strictly that of a nation, but rather that of an army, bent on conquests and extermination, and possessing very few, if any, of the characteristics of the European nations.

CHAPTER III.

TRANSITORY ELEMENTS OF STRENGTH.

IF it be not irrelevant at this time we will touch upon some of the causes which have contributed to the expansion and continuance of the Ottoman rule in Europe. It is a noteworthy circumstance that so long as the Turks went about fighting different nations they were powerful; but as soon as they abandoned their aggressive policy they began to decline. The most important victories that they achieved in the field of battle may be traced indirectly to the masterful leadership of the early Sultans. This ability on their part, no doubt, has had a tendency to infuse into the hearts of all Turks a spirit of confidence in, and veneration for, their royal heads, which abides to the present time. It is easy to see how Turkish loyalty to the Sultanate became an essential factor in the unification and enlargement of the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan, being looked upon as the divine arbiter over their temporal and spiritual affairs, may treat the least disregard of his authority as an act of treason. It

has become a sacred obligation among the Turks to defend, to their utmost, any city that may have been conquered or visited by the Sultan.

The Turks still remain faithful to the old imperial line, although, it should not be forgotten, with the disappearance of the great Sultans, their prestige has been gradually transferred to the Grand Viziers, many of whom, as we shall see later on, were Christian renegades, who became Moslem converts. Comparatively few of them were pure Turks.

Another factor in the preservation and furtherance of the Turkish rule in Europe has been the peculiar order of the Janizaries, first instituted by Orkham. In the Koran it was taught that the Mohammedans are entitled to one-fifth of the property of all vanquished nations. This strange provision was so construed as to include an exaction of tribute in the form of male children to be instructed entirely in the tenets of the Mohammedan religion. These were set apart for the most important functions of the state, but principally for the Turkish infantry. They were to become the *new soldiers*—“*Janizaries*.” Upon their installation the following words were spoken: “May their countenances be always bright, their hands victorious, their swords keen.” These words explain, in a degree, what was to be

expected of them. These children were collected once in five years, by special deputies, from all dependent provinces. Trained under the supervision of the Sultan, and subjected to the severest tests, they constituted a disciplined army, which, in subsequent years, proved to be the bulwark of Mohammedanism against the combined forces of Christendom. Some of these children showed special aptitude for the higher walks of life and were sometimes given the exalted office of Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire. "From 1453 to 1617 out of 47 grand viziers, thirty were either renegades, or children of Christian parents; four only of Ottoman or Seljukian families, and fourteen others, born Mohammedans, but not Turks."* For many years these Janizaries formed an invaluable adjunct to the Turkish army. The time came, however, when they began to feel their importance and were tempted to resist the control of the superior authorities. In 1826 their insubordination provoked the wrath of the Sultan Mahmoud, to such an extent, that he ordered their annihilation. This indiscriminate slaughter of the Janizaries by the regular troops marks a crucial epoch in the history of the Turks; for, thenceforth, the Ottoman power has been constantly on the decline.

*Edward Freeman,

The want of harmony and co-operation among the Balkan States, at the time of their invasion by the Turks, was another cause for the continued success of the Turkish arms. This feeling of animosity between the Slavs and the Greeks did not die with their subjection, but exists even to the present day. It is humiliating, but true, that at the time of the Turkish invasion, a large number of the bishops and nobles in all parts of the Balkan Peninsula, renounced their faith and nationality, in order to save their lives and property. The Christians were thereby deprived of the leaders that they needed to help them shake off the yoke of the "unspeakable Turk." The Greek bishops and nobles saved themselves the disgrace of their brethren in other parts of Eastern Europe by incurring a greater one. Claiming to be the spiritual advisers of all the Christians that had been subdued by Turks, they assumed the rôle of mediators between the oppressors and the oppressed. That they abused their falsely acquired prerogatives, there is not the shadow of a doubt; since the inoffensive victims of these unworthy bishops in Constantinople have found it easier to shake off the Turkish yoke than to be rid of the merciless bondage of the Greek Phanariots.

European diplomacy, be it said, has done more to perpetuate Turkish misrule than all other

agencies combined. The great nations of Europe have been extremely charitable in their dealings with the Turks; not that they feared the Turks, but rather, because they have been jealous of one another. In order to oppose each other's pretensions, they have affected to believe that the Sublime Porte would eventually introduce reforms that would give equal rights to all the races within its domain. The Sultan, on the other hand, realizing the existence of disharmony in the circle of European diplomacy, has persevered in his wild career.

But, will the Turks be able to withstand the slow, but persistent pressure, on the part of the great nations of Europe much longer? Will they be able to suppress the heroic efforts of the dependent nations, that are striving to regain their liberties? To these pertinent questions there can be but one answer: the overthrow of the Turkish domination is impending. It may occur any day.



CHAPTER IV.

THE IMPENDING DISSOLUTION.

IN the preceeding chapter we endeavored to show what were the peculiar conditions that have made the survival of the Ottoman power possible. Now, it shall be our object to show why the downfall of the Turkish Empire is inevitable.

We learn from history that some of the greatest nations of the world reached a period in their existence when they had to succumb to the fate, common to all nations, viz., ultimate disruption.

Babylon, Persia and Greece were once mighty nations, disposing of stupendous forces; but they are no more. Their power and glory are but memories of the past. Even in modern times this inexorable law seems to have found an exemplification in the partition of Poland and the gradual decadance of Spain. Mighty Rome, with its unmeasured resources, could scarcely withstand the waves of time. Five hundred years elapsed and Rome was no more. The Seljukians and the Saracenes, the two other great Mohammedan powers, could not survive more than three hun-

dred years, and now we see that the tottering empire of the Turks, after a restless and bloody career of five hundred years, begins to crumble; we do not say it is dying, for it is so constituted that it will not die a natural death, as it has refused to lead a normal life. It must be crushed to pieces in order to be destroyed. The day is surely coming; it should have come long ago. As we have already stated, as long as the Turks went on conquering nation after nation, they were strong and proud; as soon as they began to lose ground in the fields of battle they became weak and docile. Even the arrogant Turk realizes to-day that the Crescent must retreat before the advancing power of the Cross. We saw how, even under ordinary conditions, the decline of the Turkish Empire might have been expected; but after describing the extraordinary state of affairs now prevalent in Turkey, we cannot help expecting its speedy overthrow. In a preceeding chapter we tried to show wherein the Turks did exhibit especial strength, and why it was that they were allowed to go on unchecked in their work of robbery and assassination; now, we propose to enumerate some of the causes because of which the Turkish domination in Europe must cease.

The nineteenth century is drawing to a close,

but the Turk still remains a barbarian. The European countries are moving upward in their political, social and economic development, emulous of each other's progress. The Turks still adhere to the barbarous principle of isolation from the rest of the civilized world. Being thus reluctant to avail themselves of the fruits of modern advancement, the Turks voluntarily choose to die as they lived—real barbarians. It is true that of late there have been a few Turkish aristocrats, who have ventured to visit some European cities, in quest of knowledge, but they have returned to Turkey just as narrow as they were before. The fact that they have donned European costumes and have learned to converse a little in French, does not transform them into civilized men. There is nothing more dangerous than a barbarian who believes himself to be a civilized man. One thing is certain, and that is, that many of these polished barbarians have gone so far as to organize rings with the explicit purpose of monopolizing the higher offices in the government for their own self aggrandizement.

Another barbarous trait, which betrays itself from time to time, among the Turks, is their sudden change of temperament under apparently normal conditions. Frequently we are able to discern the two extremes in the same person. Now one

may be resting upon his divan, quiet and unimpassioned; in a little while he is furiously riding on his horse. When he becomes hungry he moves, and he moves to despoil; when he is satisfied, he grows indolent. He may be one thing to-day, and the very opposite to-morrow; in short, a thorough barbarian.

The Ottoman troops began as a band of robbers; they still remain the same. It is an every day scene in European Turkey to-day to meet with bands of Turks, Circasians, Kurds and Albanians roaming through the country, and ravaging the homes of Christian communities. Has the Turkish government sought to alleviate the sufferings of its peaceful subjects? That would be an absolute impossibility under existing conditions.

The Turk, as a Mohammedan, cannot keep pace with the more advanced nations, in the administration of government. The arts and sciences find little, if any, favor among the Turks. Painting and sculpture is expressly prohibited by the Moslem faith. The Turks are retrogressive in character; the few improvements that have been made of late being due entirely to foreigners. Their religion, which they also borrowed from the Saracens, has undergone practically no modifications to suit the times. Their literature, too, does not deserve a

mention—it is perfectly barren. They have been slow in industrial as well as agricultural pursuits, and do not take to commerce. There is no such thing as a Turkish banker. As a rule Europeans are their merchants; Armenians their bankers; Bulgarians their farmers; and Greeks their sailors. And notwithstanding all these failures, the Turks are conceited enough to believe that they are the best and the most perfect specimens of humanity, and that the rest of the world was created to make them happy and comfortable. It is not to be wondered at that they look upon their Christian subjects with contempt and will grant them no reforms. The Christians in Turkey have had a surfeit of deceptive reforms; what they now stand in need of is a radical reform, one that will sweep away both the Turkish reforms and the Turkish reformers. The enslaved people in Turkey are commencing to revive from their dormant state. With the establishment of schools and the newer agencies of cultivation, there springs up, among these down-trodden nations, a ray of hope that they, too, may become free, once more. This faint hope, in course of time, becomes a happy realization. During the last century the extent of the Turkish empire was simply enormous. It embraced all the lands that now are under the control of the Sultan, besides Bulgaria, Servia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece

Moldovia and Wallachia, Bessarabia, the Ukraine, Crimea and Crete. To-day, whether as a direct outcome of revolutions, or through the European mediation of the greater powers, all the last named countries enjoy independent life. Servia, Greece and Roumania have become altogether free from Turkish thralldom. Bosnia and Herzegovina were, at the end of the Turko-Russian war, in 1877-78, attached to Austro-Hungary. By the treaty of Berlin, Bulgaria was likewise recognized as a free principality, under the suzerainty of the Sultan; while Eastern Roumelia was given only an autonomous form of government. In 1885, however, through a bloodless revolution, the latter province was annexed to Bulgaria. During the last two years, insurrections have been in operation both in Macedonia and Crete; although temporarily suppressed, they are likely to break out anew, until these provinces become completely independent.

The accounts, which come to us almost daily, from Armenia, are by no means reassuring for the Sultan. The Armenians also, it seems, are determined to work out their freedom. The recent atrocities in that wretched country have been a disgrace to the European powers which have permitted them. The "Sick Man" of Europe is slowly, but unmistakably, dying. The defeat of

Greece will not prolong his life many more years. Greece may have been silenced, for the time being, but the other Balkan States are preparing for a determined attack upon the Turkish power in Europe. Let us hope that a new era of freedom and progress will soon dawn upon the political horizon of the Balkan peninsula.



PART II.



THE EUROPEAN CONCERT.



WE have already seen why the Ottoman Empire is tottering, and why it must inevitably fall. Now it is only a question of time when some unforeseen conflict may bring Turkish rule in Europe to an end. The final partition and redistribution of the Sultan's domains will, it is hoped, clear the Eastern horizon from the incessant strife to which it has been subjected, during the last hundred years. Who can fail to see that the governments of Europe are waiting for a chance to pounce upon the "Sick Man of Europe" and despoil him of his possessions? The fact that they have not done it yet, can hardly be attributed to the long-suffering of these powers; it should rather be ascribed to the secret fear that some one among them may

snatch away a larger portion than the rest. Disgraceful as it may seem, these jealousies, among the greater powers of Europe, have needlessly prolonged Turkey's destructive career. For more than sixty years, the shrewdest European statesmen have grappled with this vital problem, without reaching any satisfactory solution. Again and again, they have ignored the persistent cries of the oppressed peoples in Turkey, clamoring for emancipation. It seems that the great powers in Europe, are not very willing to introduce changes within the Ottoman Empire that might deprive them of possible gains, in case order and peace were restored. They are watching one another in their customary dealings with the Sultan, fearing lest some one should gain undue influence over him and thereby secure the biggest prize. This intense jealousy, among themselves, was largely responsible for the formation of the treaty at Vienna in 1815, by which England, Russia, France, Austria and Prussia, placed themselves under obligation not to attack a lesser power, without the approval of all the members, comprising the Congress of Vienna. This unusual proceeding was resorted to, as will be readily inferred, in order to preserve the balance of power.

Turkey refused to acknowledge the authority of this self-constituted concert with respect to her

own private affairs, and thenceforth became "the bone of contention in Europe."

However, although nominally at first, as in 1826, the European concert soon commenced to exercise greater authority over the Turkish Empire, until to day it has assumed absolute control over the destinies of the small nations which still remain under the jurisdiction of the Sultan. In examining the relation of the great powers to the Eastern Question, we have deemed it more expedient to explain the eastern policy of every one of them separately, in a brief and concise manner.



CHAPTER I.

RUSSIAN AGGRESSIONS.

NO one will doubt for a moment that Russia, among the great powers of Europe, has played the most prominent part toward the solution of the Eastern Question. It seems, the Russian statesmen have always regarded it their inalienable right to meddle with the internal affairs of Turkey. The Czars of Russia have, on many occasions, presumed to dictate the actions of the Sultans, with a view to their ultimate subjugation. Peter the Great, in his famous will, was very careful to outline, in unmistakable terms, the policy, which he intended that his successor should follow, by insisting that "Russia should never cease to desire the acquisition of Constantinople."*

These words constitute the keynote to Russia's subsequent movements, in the direction of Southeastern Europe. Henceforth, the fondest dreams of the Russian Czars have been to take possession of Constantinople, with all that it implies. This seemingly unjust resolution, on the

*Latimer—Russia in the Nineteenth Century, p. 96.

part of the Russian emperors, to obtain the ultimate control of the Bosphorus, does not rest entirely upon the traditional injunction of Peter the Great; it derives its sanction in part, also, from motives which are based upon religious and ethnic considerations. While it is true that the proximity of the Russian domains to the borders of the Ottoman empire has, of necessity, brought the two countries into frequent conflicts, that otherwise might have been avoided, it must be acknowledged that Russian diplomatists have labored largely under the impression that, in order to win a place among the foremost nations of Europe, Russia must have an outlet into the Mediterranean Sea. The surest way to accomplish this cherished plan would be to absorb the greatest portion of what has been known as 'Turkey in Europe;' in short, she must become the mistress both over the Balkans and the Dardanells. This object Russia purposes to achieve by means of diplomacy, if she can; by sheer force, if she must.

The notorious hostility of the Russian people against the Turk is further intensified by the knowledge that the bulk of the Turkish subjects in Europe are of Slavonic extraction, and are, besides, members of the Eastern Church; hence, all Russians feel an especial interest in them, being,

descendants of the same race and professing the same religion.

Indeed, we have no reason to doubt that the hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers who have fought so bravely against the Turks, did so under the firm conviction, that they were performing a sacred duty in liberating their own brethren, who were known to be of the same race and religion. Let us not overlook the historic ties which bind the Russian people to all South-Slavonic nations, whenever we attempt to analyse impartially the motives which impelled the Russian people to wage wars against the Mussulman forces. While the Russians sympathize with the western Slavs on account of the racial affiliations which exist between them; they sympathize even more strongly with the southern Slavs, owing to the additional bond of faith which unites them to all the Russians. Besides, this feeling has been, to a great extent reciprocal; since the oppressed Slavs in Turkey have never ceased to look upon the "white" Czars of Russia as their coming deliverers from Turkish bondage.

Having enumerated, somewhat hastily, some of the leading motives which seemed to have inspired Russia's eastern policy, it remains to show how far she has been successful in attaining the object of her desires; wherein she has failed and

wherein—triumphed. During the last fifty years, Russia has brought enormous armies upon the battlefield; she has expended millions of dollars in order the more readily to realize her highest ambition—to supplant the abominable crescent on the dome of St. Sophia, in Constantinople, with the victorious cross of the Moscovite Empire. As we shall see, thus far she has had no visible success.

How are we to account for Russia's utter failure, in her persistent endeavors, when it is remembered that the employment of such tremendous forces, under ordinary conditions, would have crushed a power much stronger than Turkey? The real cause, for this seemingly inexplicable phenomenon, is to be found in the conflict of interests existing among the great nations of Europe. Not that European diplomatists are interested in the integrity of the Turkish empire for any virtues it may have displayed; but rather the deep-seated fear that an undue expansion of Russian power may destroy the balance of power, is doubtless what excites animosity to Russia and causes resistance to her southward progress. This spirit of distrust and jealousy among the great powers of Europe was, in fact, the main pretext for the formation, as early as the seventeenth century at the peace of Westphalia, of the

so-called, European concert, the chief aim of which has been to maintain the balance of power among the greater nations. It is by no means strange, therefore, that the European powers have opposed Russian aggressions toward the Mediterranean Sea and that they have sought to readjust the difficulties that are connected with the Eastern Question in some other way than the one advocated by Russia. In 1828 Russia invaded Turkey, under the pretext of enforcing the provisions of the treaty of Bucharest, and laid siege to many important strongholds on the highway to Constantinople. The Turks displayed marvelous courage in defending their positions, but the struggle was unequal; so that they were obliged to capitulate. Later on, Adrianople surrendered, and the Russians were only one hundred and twenty miles from the coveted point—Constantinople. The foreign ambassadors, trembling lest the Russian troops should bring Turkish rule in Europe to an end, and destroy thereby the balance of power, urged the cessation of hostilities, and the war had to come to an end. Whatever may have been to other nations the benefits of this war, Russia received no adequate compensation for her outlay of money and her great sacrifice of men.

The Crimean war in 1855 and 1856, was another

futile attempt, of Russia, under Nicholas I., to assert her right of protectorate over the twelve millions of Christians, then under Turkish sway. England and France, again fearing Russia's supremacy over the Balkan peninsula, resolved to oppose her by declaring war. Thus united, they were enabled to withstand Russia's encroachment for the time being; but who will dare to say that the outcome of the Crimean war was just exactly what it was expected to be by Russia's mighty opponents?

The last and most stupendous of Russia's efforts to accomplish her design upon the Turkish empire was made in 1877 and 1878, at which time Russian arms were, as before, crowned with success. At the treaty of St Stephano, by far the largest portion of European Turkey was ceded to Bulgaria; but with the tacit understanding that the latter should acknowledge the authority of of the Czar in all matters pertaining to her foreign policy. As it was to be expected, the treaty appeared exceedingly objectionable to the other powers, comprising the European concert; so that in the congress of Berlin, in July, 1878, the provisions of the treaty of St. Stephano were abrogated, and a new treaty concluded. By its stipulations Russia was unceremoniously deprived of the fruits of her victories. Though it may have

appeared very humiliating to Russia, she was compelled, by stress of circumstances, to succumb to the mandates of this high tribunal, and to wait for further developments. The arbitrary doings of this conference present to us a typical illustration of the unscrupulous methods of "European diplomacy." Clemanceau's characterization of it is by no means overdrawn, when he remarks that, "Every one wants what he has not got, and the difficulty is to arrange to get it and to keep it. In private matters it would be brigandage; in international matters it is called politics; hitherto it is might that has decided among nations; not right or justice."*

The attitude of Russia toward the Balkan states constitutes another chapter of inexcusable blunders in her oriental policy. Her political agents have proven altogether too selfish and too arrogant to merit the support of the intelligent classes within these young nations. In fact, the disaffection, among the Roumanians, Servians and Bulgarians, has spread to such an extent, that it now forms one of the most formidable obstructions to Russia's aspirations in the Balkans.

Moreover, the invariable practice among Russian officials, to trample upon the numerous nation-

*The New York Independent, Dec. 3, '96.

alities that have been brought under Russia's domination, may prove to be another obstacle in the attainment of her goal. This attempt to obliterate the smaller nationalities can be observed in the forcible introduction of the Russian language into the Polish schools, and quite recently, into the newly acquired provinces in southern Russia.

Strange as it may seem, the Czars have also sought to attain their end by fomenting revolutionary movements in foreign nations, even though these are so bitterly deprecated in Russia. We notice accordingly, that while Russia did so much to bring about the liberation of the Servians in 1820, she showed herself later on inalterably opposed to the ardent wishes of all patriotic Servians to obtain greater freedom, and rather than aid them in their noble effort, Russia forced Milosch to abdicate, in 1857. The same is true of Russia's treatment of Kara George, it being an open secret that her agent in Belgrade sustained a great number of conspirators, with the avowed object of so weakening the state, so to cause it to feel its need of Russia's direct supervision, if not immediate control. To the credit of Servian patriotism, be it said, that, instead of looking to Russia for real help at critical periods, the Servians have sought direction from Western Europe.

Russia is bound to lose her influence in Bulgaria, exactly as she lost it in Servia and Croatia. The real patriots in Bulgaria to-day are well aware of Russia's underhand policy. There was a time, within the memory of the present generation, when every Bulgarian revered the very name of Russia, and cherished only the most profound affection for her people. To-day intelligent people in Bulgaria are sorely afraid of the "protecting care" which the Czar is so eager to extend to them from time to time. Most of the political upheavals in Bulgaria, since 1878, may be traced, either directly or indirectly, to Russian intrigues. Relying unreservedly upon the kindly feeling of the peasants for the Russian people, the agents of the Czar have gone so far as to preach openly against the sovereign power of the very states which the Russian army helped to create.

The cruel treatment of Prince Alexander of Bulgaria, at the hands of the Russian autocrat, presents another striking picture of Russian methods in dealing with the Balkan States. Prince Alexander was elected to the Bulgarian throne, largely through the influence of the Russian court and was, therefore, a *persona grata*, as long as he consented to obey the dictation of the Russian government. As soon as he inaugurated an inde-

pendent policy, and refused to cater to the caprices of the Russian agents, he fell into disfavor with the Russian diplomatists. When the union of Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia was effected, through a bloodless revolution, the European nations were greatly surprised to see the Czar the foremost among those who opposed the infraction of that same treaty of Berlin, which proved so disastrous to Russian prestige but a few years before. Russia would not tolerate a strong, united Principality that would stand in her way to Constantinople. In order to annul the union of the two provinces, Russia, supported by Austria, induced King Milan of Servia to invade Bulgarian territory without having the least pretext for doing so. Fortunately for Bulgaria, her troops came out victorious, and Russia remained still dissatisfied. The European powers, including Turkey herself, agreed to acknowledge the union as an accomplished fact. Russia, alone, insisted on its abolition and positively refused to sanction it. Failing in her design thus far, Russia's next move was to create disturbances within the country itself. To this end, her agents in Sofia organized a conspiracy of inexperienced officers, who kidnapped the Prince and left the country in a state of anarchy. Here again Bulgarian patriotism saved the country. The Prince being for-

cibly carried to Russia, the loyal citizens, with the aid of the army, arose with one accord, and restored order, and urged Stambouloff to assume undisputed control of the government till the return of Alexander. This he did in spite of Russian threats. The indignation which these Russian intrigues caused was as intense as it was universal. Even the more conservative element in Russia was greatly scandalized to see the Emperor of Russia shielding conspirators abroad, although known to be as guilty as the Nihilists, whom he detested so much at home. It becomes self-evident, therefore, that Russia's policy, in all her relations with the Balkan States, has been to keep them as weak as possible, in order that she might the more readily bring them under her sway in the near future.

Even the Roumanians have not escaped "the haughty and despotic behavior on the part of the Russians."

How can the Czar expect the co-operation of the Balkan States, when it is remembered that the greatest foe to their independence is this same Russian government, which helped to make them free? It is not to be wondered at, then, that Russia finds so little encouragement, even among the purely Slavonic communities, in her project of self-aggrandizement.

Russia, it seems, does not regard the present time as being very propitious for an offensive attack upon the Ottoman Empire. On the contrary, she now assumes the attitude of the staunchest champion of Turkish interests. The Sultan relies on Russia's protection which, it is to be feared, is of such a nature as to accelerate his downfall. Turkey's experience now does not vary much from that of Poland, prior to her partition. Even though Catherine had assured the Poles that she had espoused their cause, it was that she might the more readily absorb them. It is much to be feared lest the protection that Turkey now enjoys be of the same kind.

The late war between Greece and Turkey furnishes another chapter of Russian intrigues with reference to the Eastern Question. Affecting to assume a friendly attitude toward Greece, Russian diplomacy did not hesitate to resort to the meanest schemes in order to baffle the heroic endeavors of the Greek people. It was quite in accord with Russian policy to suppress in the Balkan peninsula any movement that had for its end the advancement of the Greek cause. It was for this reason that the Russian ambassador at Constantinople, M. de Nelidoff, protested most emphatically against Bulgaria's manifestations of hostility to Turkey during the progress of the

war, stating that the time was inopportune. In short, Russia did not desire to see the Bulgarians join the Greeks in their struggle against the common enemy, lest the Turkish arms should suffer before the allied forces of the Christian people in the peninsula. The Czar would gladly aid the oppressed nationalities in Turkey, so long as they are ready to acknowledge his authority over them, either directly or indirectly; as soon as these countries begin to feel the need of self-government, the Russian statesmen seem to exhaust their ingenuity in efforts to frustrate all such legitimate aspirations. Russia went so far as to affirm that she could not consent to aid the Armenians, who were slaughtered by thousands, simply because she did not wish to "create another Bulgaria" in Asia Minor. These words are as significant as they are plain.

Russia herself wants to inherit the possessions of the "dying man" of Turkey; and that is why she would have neither Greece nor Bulgaria, nor any other power deprive Turkey of any part of her territory. Moreover we are compelled to admit, that Russian influence in Constantinople just now is paramount and, if continued, may bring forth unexpected changes in the map of Europe.

CHAPTER II.

ENGLAND'S ATTITUDE.

ENGLAND'S main policy, in the Levant, has been to uphold her interests in Asia and to contribute her share in the preservation of "the balance of power." She is frequently censured, however, by disinterested critics for being somewhat unscrupulous in her dealings with weaker nations. This disposition, on her part, has caused many of the European diplomatists to look upon her movements with a great deal of suspicion. Certainly, England's reluctance to evacuate Egypt, in accordance with her promises, may be viewed as an open violation of good faith and would be regarded as discreditable even in a less civilized government.

Nevertheless, it can hardly be said of England that she is animated with the same purposes which seem to inspire the Russian authorities with reference to the Balkan States. On the contrary, England's emphatic stand against Russia's repeated incursions towards the Bosphorus, has, more than once, secured for the Balkan States

their rights of self-government. Some Englishmen have gone so far even, as to affirm that England has no foreign policy but to maintain her interests in the far East, to establish and retain full control over her south African possessions, and to preserve the neutrality of the Suez canal—her highway to India. This explains in part why, since the Crimean war, England has made no formal alliance with any of the European powers. Isolated, as she is, by water, it is of little concern to English statesmen what may be the boundaries of the European nations, except in so far as these affect British interests abroad. In the solution of the Eastern question, England is justified in taking active part; since the impending dissolution of the Turkish Empire may result disastrously to her interests in the East, were she to remain altogether passive.

It is easy to understand how this fear of future complications may have led English statesmen to regard with apprehension the extinction of Turkish rule. England has watched, with an anxious eye, the rapid diffusion of Russian influence throughout Asia. The extension of Russian territory over that continent, during the last century though gradual, has been enormous and, should it continue at the same rate, the day would not be far off, when England, herself, may have to face

Russian forces in central Asia. It is a serious matter for English statesmen to consider whether it would not be a wiser plan for them to counteract Russian encroachments now, while they may depend upon the co-operation of other great nations of Europe, than by waiting, incur the risk of a decisive conflict, single-handed, upon the plains of central Asia. Nor is it safe for England to allow Russian supremacy to establish itself in Eastern Europe; for once mistress of the straits of Dardanells, Russia might readily drive English commerce from the Levant and destroy eventually even the balance of power in Europe. To avert some such catastrophe, England has frequently felt under the humiliating necessity of enduring Turkish domination, as the least of many evils. For the same reason Great Britain, with a view to her own self-aggrandizement, has been forced to ignore, now and then, the individual claims of the Christian nations, still governed by the Sultan, especially since these have been supported by Russia. This will be shown more fully when we discuss the recent policy of England with respect to Turkey and the rising states in the Balkan peninsula. It was undoubtedly this fear which impelled England, in conjunction with France, to undertake the hard and expensive war of the Crimea. They could not allow the

Russian troops to march unimpeded over the Danubian plains. That also explains why Lord Beaconsfield exerted all the influence at his command to abrogate the treaty of St. Stephano and thus to baffle the secret designs of the Russian Czars.

It must be admitted, however, that in pursuing this policy, England has not been wholly free from selfish motives and objectionable methods; neither did she succeed in concealing them from the world. When Greece first struggled for independence, England opposed the noble endeavors of the Greeks. When the Balkan states were rising into being, England's aim was to weaken them as much as possible in order to hold them under the suzerainty of the Sultan; for, in the survival of the Ottoman Empire, did the English diplomatists see the continuance of English ascendancy in the Levant.

Lord Salisbury, on the 7th of October, 1886, said: "Our policy must be to support Turkey whenever her rule is beneficent; whenever mischievous we should raise independent nationalities which would safeguard the peace of Europe." Pitt also expressed an opinion that it would be to the best interests of England to spare the Turks as far as possible. In 1878 Disraeli strongly opposed the creation of a free and united Bulgaria, fearing

the preponderance of Russian authority in the Balkans. The motives were good, no doubt, but the methods would hardly stand a very close scrutiny. The time is not far off, if it is not already at hand, when English statesmen will be convinced that their policy in supporting Turkey was a great mistake, and that they lost much influence in the Balkan peninsula by not following the advice of some of the Liberal leaders and especially Gladstone, who urged the liberation and organization of independent states. The support which England has given to the Sultan, during the present century, should not be construed as an approval of Turkish methods of government, but rather, as the best that could be done under the circumstances. The heart-rending atrocities, perpetrated upon inoffensive Christians in Bulgaria and Armenia in recent years by the blood-thirsty Turks, have aroused in England such a storm of indignation, that even the Conservative cabinet could not ignore it. The people of England are now well aware of the fact that it is utterly impossible to introduce any reforms within the Turkish domains, and that a new policy should be inaugurated to do away with Turkish depredations. This conviction has grown so deep and strong all over England of late, that some

English statesmen have gone so far as to advocate the surrender of Constantinople itself, if only they can appease thereby Russian cupidity and bring about a speedy termination to this troublesome question. It is hardly likely, however, that England will voluntarily permit the occupation of Constantinople by Russian troops; since it is quite obvious that so long as England rules over India, it is extremely important to keep the Russians at a greater distance from it. This attitude on the part of the Liberals is, in itself, an admission of English defeat in Eastern Europe, due very largely to stupid miscalculations. If, instead of helping Turkey to perpetuate her rule in Europe, Great Britain had used her power and resources to strengthen the Balkan states, the advantages which are now enjoyed by Russia in the Balkans might have been England's. This grave blunder becomes more and more apparent as the days go by, much to the chagrin of British statesmen. If, instead of opposing the formation of a strong Bulgarian state, the British representatives at Berlin in 1878 had approved of it, how much less inducement would the Bulgarians have had to rely upon Russia for the support which they have needed from some strong power for the realization of their national ideal—the unification of all Bulgaria. The English government has discovered

at last that the Balkan states will not succumb to Russian despotism as readily as it was at first supposed. On the contrary, there seems to be a strong disposition on their part, to construe Russian aggressiveness in the East, as a menace to their own rights of self-government. This was clearly demonstrated in 1885, when Russia flatly refused to recognize the union of the Bulgarian principality with Eastern Roumelia, then but an autonomous state, under the indirect control of the Sultan. Unfortunately England could not foresee the possibility of such an estrangement between Russia and Bulgaria; and now that she is friendly to the Balkan states, her support is of little avail.

The isolation of England from all sorts of European alliances has, no doubt, worked to her advantage; as she has always known how to profit from the battles of other people. Disraeli's occupation of Cyprus, at the end of the Russo-Turkish war in 1878, is a striking illustration of that fact. Her impregnable position, surrounded as she is, by the seas, has made her absolutely safe from such foreign invasions as would endanger other European powers at critical moments. Moreover, in studying England's attitude toward the Eastern Question, it should be borne in mind that her tactics have varied somewhat with the political

party that happened to be dominant in Parliament. The Liberal party, under the leadership of Gladstone, is generally known to have been in favor of the suppression of the Turkish power in Europe and of the liberation of the Balkan nationalities. Gladstone's manly intercession in behalf of Bulgaria and Armenia is too fresh in the minds of all freedom-loving people to need any special mention.


The Conservative party, on the other hand, pursuing a bitterly anti-Russian policy, has sought in vain to resuscitate a government which, by its very nature, is doomed to certain perdition. Lord Salisbury's ministry has not done much in the way of winning friends for England. Neither Germany nor France have become reconciled to Salisbury's dictatorial ways. At all events, there has been a remarkable change in the attitude of England, within the last few years with reference to the Eastern Question. It must be admitted that Lord Salisbury was outwitted at every point by Russian statesmen during the progress of the late war between Greece and Turkey. Russian recommendations were almost always effective in the councils of the European concert, while Salisbury's wishes were left unheeded. It is to be hoped, however, that England will try to redeem herself from the disgrace, which rests upon her for having sus-

tained the cause of the Sultan, in spite of the fact that his government has caused untold misery to countless human beings, millions of whom are still groaning under his jurisdiction.



CHAPTER III.

AUSTRIA'S POSITION.

 WING to her nearness to the Balkan peninsula Austria comes next in importance in connection with the Eastern Question. She has no interests in the west since all the avenues to her future greatness lead eastward. Salonica seems to be one of the diplomatic posts toward which Austria is now directing her attention; she is eagerly watching the course of events in the East, with a view to securing her position among the powerful nations now forming the European concert.

Austria's policy of late years, however, has been of a defensive rather than of an offensive character. Unlike England, her navy is poorly equipped to aid her in the acquisition of new colonies, and is barely strong enough for coast defense. In fact, Austria's position looks somewhat precarious in view of the heterogeneous character of the population. The disturbances in the Austrian Chamber of late over the proposed introduction of the Czech language in Bohemia corroborates our statement. Besides, Russia's

pretensions respecting the partition of the Ottoman Empire, are altogether incompatible with Austria's interests. It becomes therefore highly important that Austria gain stronger foothold upon the Balkan peninsula. She has already succeeded in clearing the way for her products over the entire south-eastern peninsula. There is no doubt that Austria has gained considerable influence, also, with the intelligent classes of Servia, Roumania and Bulgaria, who are thoroughly in sympathy with western civilization, and will do much in shaping the future policy of their respective countries. Moreover, the friendly course of Austria in her dealings with the Danubian States has won for her the favor of the foremost statesmen of the Levant, notwithstanding the bitter opposition of the Pan-Slavic agitators, who are continually scheming how they might undermine her prestige in the East. They appeal constantly to the prejudices of the masses, who are for the most part Slavs, alleging that Austria is conspiring to seize Salonica, with the avowed purpose of making it her eastern outpost and of developing it into the greatest seaport of the Empire. That there have been writers in Austria who have advocated the occupation of Salonica, there is no question ; but it is hardly probable that the federal government of Austria-Hungary has entertained such a hope,

in view of the fact that even now a large proportion of her total population is made up of Slavs, which does not by any means augur stability for the Austrian Empire. It should not be forgotten that the so-called Pan-Slavistic question includes some of the provinces now under Austria, let alone those still remaining under Turkish rule. The liberal policy of the Austrian government in dealing with the diversified elements within its jurisdiction has had a great tendency to assuage the boisterous passions among the young Czechs (Bohemians) and the other Slavonic nationalities, who are apt to look to Russia for inspiration; and it is a well-known fact that Austria's most powerful antagonist, so far as her interests in south-eastern Europe are concerned, is Russia. The Czar considers himself the protector of all the Slavs, and particularly so those professing the Orthodox faith, and for that reason the only rightful ruler over them. The Russians have not forgotten the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina—two purely Slavonic provinces—to the Austrian Empire, and they are now waiting for a favorable opportunity to resent what they regard as an insult to the Slavonic race.

The claims of General Fadeeff that the best road from Moscow to Constantinople is by way of Vienna is very significant, and should not be over-

looked by Austrian statesmen in directing their policy with regard to the Eastern Question.

It is easy to determine why Austria could ill-afford to permit Russia "to establish herself on the shores of the Bosphorus," and why the creation of independent states in the Balkan peninsula, would be more likely to insure the peace of Europe.

The idea of an Austro-Russian agreement, such as the one advocated by the late Archduke Albrecht, the victor at Custarza, and that of Archduke Charles Louis, the Emperor's brother, is wholly impracticable. There is greater security in an alliance with Germany and Italy, now forming the Triple Alliance, or even with England herself, than to incur the risk of a Russian occupation of Constantinople, an event that will be fraught with grave dangers for the Austrian Empire. The building up of commerce among the Balkan States through the aid of railways, and the establishment of commercial relations with every one of the Balkan States, have already given Austria the economic supremacy over them. Through perseverance and a clear-sighted policy Austria-Hungary has reached a point where she can command three-fourths of the traffic among the people of this peninsula. It becomes apparent, therefore, why Austria is particularly interested

in the just solution of the Eastern Question.
And yet the surest way by which Austria could
serve her own interests among the Balkan States
would be to foster and uphold their independence.



CHAPTER IV.

FRANCE, GERMANY AND ITALY.

FRANCE may be said to have pursued a well-defined policy in the affairs of Eastern Europe and in the main she has been very generous to the people of Turkey. In consenting to join England in the Crimean war, France departed from her traditional policy—the emancipation of the rayahs. Subsequent events, however, seemed to have complicated her Oriental policy still further. Had she had the able men of whom she stood in special need, France might have formed such political combinations as would have saved her the deep humiliation of 1870. As it is, the all pervading sentiment “Revenge” seems to control French diplomacy now,—so that we are treated to an unnatural spectacle of an alliance between France and Russia—the nations having the two most contradictory forms of government in Europe. France is desirous of recovering her lost provinces; Russia is anxious to reach Constantinople; they feel that through an alliance they may be of service to each other in their cherished ambi-

tions—hence republican France and autocratic Russia join hands for the realization of their objects. Russia was in need of money; France needed assistance in her desire to rescue Alsace-Lorraine, and since they could be mutually helpful they concluded the dual alliance at Cronstadt. The visit which the President of the French Republic paid to the Russian Czar seemed to cement and strengthen the alliance already existing between them.

While there may be a community of interests between them in the affairs of central Europe; upon matters pertaining to the Eastern Question the interests of France are diametrically opposed to those of Russia. The Republic of France could hardly afford to surrender Constantinople to Russia; and permit her to become the dominant power in the Mediterranean; especially if France is determined to control Syria, as has been claimed by a number of chauvinistic Frenchmen. The Czar would never tolerate the possession of the Holy Land by a Roman Catholic power; so France has practically entered into an agreement with a power that is strongly opposed to the propagation of French interests in the Orient.

Whatever may have been the motives which prompted France to agree to an alliance with Russia, it is admitted upon reliable authority that

France will in no way interfere with Russia's designs in the East, if the latter will facilitate the restoration of the lost provinces to France.

Germany's influence in the Eastern affairs of Europe is not as far reaching to-day as it has been in former years. Prince Bismark has repeatedly announced that Germany has no interest in the solution of the Eastern Question. In his open disavowal of interest in Oriental affairs, the iron Chancellor of former years did not hesitate to say in the Reichstag, some twenty years ago, that "the whole of Bulgaria is not worth the bones of one single Pomeranian grenadier," showing in unmistakable terms what a loyal German he could be even, though he proclaimed himself to be a narrow-minded and bigoted statesman. Bismark has no doubt succeeded in creating a strong German government, but in doing so, had no scruples in resorting to the most forbidden methods, which well-nigh brought about the complete isolation of Germany from the rest of the European powers. The Russians do not disguise in the least their boundless hate for Germany and her Eastern policy in the past. Even Austria and Italy, the other two members of the Dreikund, betray some dissatisfaction with Germany, for having permitted Bismark to conclude the secret neutrality agreement with Russia in 1884

and thereby thwart the very object for which the Triple Alliance had been effected. In England, public opinion has become strongly averse to Germany's diplomacy ; especially so since the telegraphic congratulations which the German Emperor sent to Kruger for having baffled the English raid on the Transvaal. We may well surmise that, but for fear of a Franco-Russian alliance, Germany might have treated Austria less cordially ; but she understands that France is her everlasting enemy, and that France supported by Russia would form a strong combination against her. This the German Emperor fully realized when he concluded to visit the Hungarian capital with a view of organizing a closer relationship with Austria-Hungary for mutual protection. Germany becomes vulnerable without a defensive alliance with Austria, Italy and, if necessary, even England herself.

Italy's policy with respect to the Eastern Question is well defined. To the credit of the Italian diplomatists, be it said, that they have urged the establishment of independent states in the Balkan peninsula whenever that seemed practicable. Italy's diplomacy in the East, consequently, has always been friendly to any movement the prime end of which has been the liberation of the oppressed nations in Turkey.

Owing to Italy's reverses in her recent expedi-

tions in Abyssinia, she has suffered to such an extent that her participation in the solution of the Eastern Question could not affect the result either way very materially.

We have thus tried to explain briefly the policy of the greater powers of Europe, and to show how it has affected the future destiny of the Balkan States. We will now endeavor to examine the conflict of interests among the nationalities which has retarded greatly the ultimate solution of the difficulties in south-eastern Europe.



PART III.

THE STRIFE AMONG THE BALKAN STATES.

IT must be acknowledged that the final readjustment of difficulties in the East has been delayed, also, in a large measure because of the irreconcilable enmity existing between the various nationalities which, at one period or another, have exerted controlling influence over the affairs of the peninsula. Had there been a peaceable understanding among the peoples, who are directly interested in the equitable re-distribution of the Turkish domains in Europe, this difficult problem might have been settled even without the need of an European intervention. The masterly way in which the union of Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia was effected twelve years ago, is a splendid illustration of the advantages that may be derived from united action on the part of the Balkan nationalities.

Unfortunately for these people, thus far they have been unable to muster their forces against

the bitter foes of their independence ; on the contrary, they have chosen rather to waste their meagre resources in needless strife and bloody wars with one another. This feeling of unrest and antipathy is observable even among kindred races; for were it not so, the late war between Servia and Bulgaria would have been impossible. Nor is it altogether inexplicable when it is remembered that no less than eight different nationalities are vying with one another for ultimate supremacy. The situation is further complicated on account of the heterogenous elements that have settled in close proximity to one another, and are frequently found in the same towns and villages.



CHAPTER I.

ETHNIC AND TERRITORIAL RELATIONS.

IN order to form an adequate conception of the extraordinary condition of affairs in the Balkan peninsula, we need only to glance at the ethnic distribution of the peoples within its territory. To this end it may be expedient to divide the entire population, residing within this region, into three principal groups, as follows :

The Slavonic peoples, comprising by far the largest proportion of the inhabitants.

The Greco-Latin group, under which we may include the Greeks, Roumanians and Albanians; and lastly

All other races, embracing the remaning nationalities not included in the two above-mentioned classes, such as the Jews, Armenians, Gypsies, Turks, Circassians, etc., etc.

In discussing the individual claims of the various nationalities, we shall not attach great importance to the presence of the Turks, notwithstanding their numerical strength ; having reasons to believe that their sojourn within the bounds of Europe is temporary, and will cease with the over-

throw of the Mohammedan rule therein. The Turks have deserted their homes in Servia and Bulgaria as soon as these Christian provinces were declared independent. The few that still remain there are likewise contemplating emigration, sometime in the near future. Religious fanaticism, doubtless, is largely responsible for this unusual proceeding on the part of the Turks.

The Slavonic group embraces the Servians, Montenegrins, Bulgarians as well as all the southern Slavs of the Austrian empire.

The Servians number about 2,000,000 in Servia proper; besides some 250,000 in Montenegro; 1,350,000 in Herzegovina and 2,350,000 in Austria-Hungary.* The kingdom of Servia, which is bounded on the north by the river Danube; west by the Drina; south by Turkey; and east by Bulgaria and Roumania; has an area of 18,754 square miles, measuring 140 miles from east to west, by 110 from north to south. Servia has seven cities of over 10,000 people. The country abounds in fine forests and fertile plains. It is crossed by mountains, particularly in the southeast and southwest of the country.

The Montenegrins; Closely related to the Servian people, and speaking practically the same language, are the Montenegrins, a heroic but primi-

*Chambers Encyclopedia.

tive people, inhabiting the region which lies between Herzegovina and Albania, about 80 miles long by 70 broad. Montenegro's area is officially quoted to be 3255 square miles. The Montenegrins number 236,000.

The provinces of *Bosnia and Herzegovina* are known to be the most picturesque sections in the Balkan peninsula. They are inhabited, for the most part, by Slavs, although quite a number of Jews and Gypsies are also to be found interspersed through the country—the former being the wealthiest merchants of the land. The area of Bosnia is about 16,142 square miles; that of Herzegovina 3515, while Novi-Bazar, a sanjak lying between Montenegro and Serbia extends over an area of 3522 square miles. The total population of these three provinces, now under Austria, may reach about 1,500,000.

The provinces of *Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia* though historically associated with the destiny of the Balkan nations, will not be considered here at length, excepting in so far as they become indispensable factors in the solution of the Eastern Question.

The Bulgarian Principality, bounded by the Danube on the north, the Black Sea on the east, Turkey on the south, and Turkey and Serbia on the west, has an area of 38,560 square miles with

a population of about 3,000,000. The Bulgarians speak a dialect of the Slavonic tongue. Originally of Touranian extraction, soon after their invasion into the peninsula, they were absorbed by the Slavs, whose language and customs they adopted, retaining still their original name—*Bulgarians*.

Impartial authorities place the total number of Bulgarians at 6,000,000, scattered all over the peninsula. The Bulgarians vary somewhat from their neighbors, the Servians, in that they are smaller in stature but powerfully built; and although by no means as vivacious as the Servians, they are fully as intelligent and industrious. It is a noteworthy fact that the chief pursuit of all the southern Slavs is agriculture and the rearing of flocks and herds. They are well known for their hospitality. They are also of a peaceable disposition, going to war only in self-defence. While each branch of the South Slavonic family employs a distinctive dialect, peculiar to itself, it is nevertheless true that all of these peoples could readily understand one another, if they were thrown together.

The Greeks of to-day are by no means the pure descendants of the illustrious Greeks of ancient times. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the majority of the Greeks in Europe are

merely Hellenized Slavs and Albanians. The names of quite a number of towns and villages are silent witnesses of the origin of a large part of the Greeks—as for example “Schlavochorion”, Slavonic town. It would be a very liberal estimate of the number of Greeks, outside of Greece proper, now residing in the Balkan States, if we place the figure at 150,000*; many putting it as low as 50,000. Later on we shall have occasion to examine more in detail the respective claims of the different races inhabiting these territories. It may be well to note at this juncture that the Greeks are as a rule given over to commerce and navigation. This accounts in part for their wonted predilection to settle down in the cities and towns all along the coast of the Ægean and Black Seas.

The Albanians, occupy the mountainous regions, bounded on the north by Dalmatia, Montenegro and Bosnia; on the east by Servia and Macedonia; on the south by Northern Greece; and on the west by the Adriatic Sea. The superficial area of Albania is estimated at about 18,944 square miles with a population of about 1,200,000, mostly Mohammedans. The Albanians are considered to be one of the oldest races in Europe, and have a language of their own, thought to be somewhat modified by the Greek and Slavonic vernaculars.

*See Baker and Lavelle.

The Roumanians, outside of the province of Roumania and south of the Danube, are so very few that we need hardly concern ourselves about them at this time. Of late there seems to be a disposition on the part of the Roumanian government to espouse the cause of the few thousand Tzintzas, who are scattered all over the peninsula, on the ground that they are related to each other both as to language and religion. They are said to descend from those Volaks who lived on the produce of their flocks in some mountainous districts in Greece, Thrace and Albania.*

The third group comprises the *Jews*, a large number of whom emigrated from Spain in the fifteenth century and settled down in the larger cities of the Balkan peninsula ; they are found in larger numbers in Macedonia. In their present state the Jews seem to have no greater ambition than to make money, and they doubtless succeed well in doing so, for they are considered to be the richest merchants and bankers in the land. The Jewish population in the entire peninsula is estimated at about 158,000.†

The Armenians are like the Jews for the most part merchants and bankers, although quite a number of them occupy high positions under the

*E. DeLavelye, p. 142.

†Baker.

government of the Sultan. Their number being inconsiderable, the Armenians could hardly exert any influence on the future of the Balkan States.

The Gypsies constitute another unique race, wandering about from place to place all over the peninsula. They are said to have come from India, and number in all about 200,000 souls. Their nomadic habits would lead us to suppose that they are of Touranian extraction, while their language and general appearance would indicate Arian descent. We have thus defined briefly the racial affiliations and geographical distribution of the different nationalities inhabiting the Balkan States.



• CHAPTER II.

AWAKENING AND EMANCIPATION.

THE Turks are retreating ! Ever since the crushing defeat which they sustained before the gates of Vienna, they have been moving backward until to-day we see them restricted to a small portion of the great Ottoman Empire of former times. The blood-thirsty and disorderly hordes of the followers of Islam are surely, though slowly, retreating before the advancing tide of Christian civilization.

Nations hitherto suppressed, are waking out of their lethargic state and are rapidly throwing off the abominable yoke of the Turks. What a joy to be free from the bondage of the Turks ! Those only who have felt the cruel weight of Turkish oppression can fully realize its meaning.

Hungary was the first to expel the intruder; her example was soon followed by the people in Transylvania, Croatia and Bessarabia. The brave Servians in 1815 achieved their independence under Milosch Obrenovitch. To this very day the Servians pride themselves upon the fact

that they regained their freedom through their own individual exertions, unaided by foreign countries, although they are profoundly thankful for the moral support accorded them by the Russian people.

During the succeeding period of fifty years, two opposing factions, supporting respectively the dynasties of Milosch and Kara George, plunged the country into new quarrels, from which it was not entirely saved till 1868, when Milan IV., a grandson of Yephrem, brother of the famous Milosch, was elected Prince of Servia. But, notwithstanding these internal disturbances, the national spirit of the Servians was strengthened and the supremacy of the law established throughout the land. The army and militia were likewise organized, and the nation began to advance along the paths of peace and prosperity. A new constitution was framed, placing all the power in the hands of the Prince and Scoupshtina (National Assembly), whose members were to be elected by the people. In 1876 the Servians again rose in arms against the Turks, but barely escaped annihilation: they were saved only by the intervention of Russia. During the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78, the Servians took part against the Turks, and, as a result, obtained complete independence, beside the annexa-

tion of the three districts of Nish, Pirot and Leskovatz. Prince Milan was proclaimed King in 1882. The war against the Bulgarians in 1885 brought a great humiliation upon the Servian people. In consequence of this war, it will be remembered, King Milan was forced to abdicate in favor of his son Alexander, who remains to this day the ruling King of Servia.

Montenegro had its narrow limits extended in 1878 by the annexation of a large district on the north, a narrow strip on the east, as far as Lake Scutari, and the port and district of Antivary on the Adriatic Sea. In 1880 the port and district of Dulcigno were also attached to Montenegro. This principality, whose people are noted for their valor and chastity, never fully succumbed to the Turks. From the year 1516, when the last prince of the second dynasty abdicated his throne, the government of the people was entrusted to the Bishop, and the country was thenceforth ruled by ecclesiastical rulers who were called "vladicass." This regime continued till the year 1851, when Danilo I. separated the civil from the ecclesiastical functions, and succeeded in declaring the throne hereditary in his family. During the past 500 years the chief pursuit of the Montenegrins has been to fight the Turks, their perpetual foes. They have had, therefore, no opportunity to

make much headway in the higher walks of life. At the present time, however, there seems to be a desire on the part of the Montenegrins to adapt themselves to the newer conditions of existence, and to seek the promotion of all agencies which stand for progress and civilization.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with the treaty of Berlin, were handed over to the administration of Austria-Hungary, and while the condition of the people has greatly improved under the new government, the people are far from being satisfied with the new order of things. They too have their national ideals to realize.

The Croats are even more pronounced in their hatred of the Hungarian authorities, and are anxiously waiting for a new era of national unity and self-government.

The Bulgarians were the last, among the southern Slavs, to break away from the oppression of the Turks. With the establishment of Bulgarian schools in 1835, and the liberation of the native church from the domination of the Greek Patriarch in 1864, a new epoch in the history of the Bulgarians commenced. In 1876 several heroic, although unsuccessful, insurrections in Bulgaria aroused the fear of the Sultan to such an extent that he ordered the Moslems, and notably the Bashi-Bouzuks, to exterminate a

large portion of the defenceless Bulgarians. They succeeded in butchering twelve thousand people, in which number there were many women and children. The Bulgarian atrocities awakened horror all over the civilized world. The Russian Czar, who had assumed the role of a guardian over the destinies of the Slavonic races in Turkey, declared war in 1877, and his armies were fast approaching Constantinople. The Turks were compelled to sue for peace, and by the treaty of St. Stephano, the ancient limits of the Bulgarian Kingdom, extending from the Danube across Macedonia to the Ægean Sea, were to have been restored. The European powers (England in particular), fearing lest a strong and united Bulgaria under Russia's protectorate might destroy the balance of power, called a new congress at Berlin, and split the Bulgarian nation into five parts. That portion lying north of the Balkans, known as Moesia, was recognized as a constitutional principality, but still tributary to the Porte. Eastern Roumelia, or that section which is known as Northern Thrace, was organized into an autonomous province, under the indirect supervision of the Porte. Macedonia was left under the authority of the Sultan, with certain stipulations guaranteeing personal liberty to all inhabitants, which were never put into execution by the crafty

officials of the Sultan. Dobrudja and Pirot, two districts inhabited almost exclusively by Bulgarians were ceded to Roumania and Servia respectively. In 1885, Eastern Roumelia was united to Bulgaria through an understanding on the part of the dignitaries of both provinces: the union was consummated by a bloodless revolution! Prince Alexander, who is often designated as the hero of the last decade, was the first ruler of Bulgaria. He was elected to the throne by the National Assembly and approved by the powers constituting the European concert. After the Bulgaro-Servian war, in 1885, Prince Alexander, becoming the centre of Bulgaria's national aspirations, lost the favor of the Czar, and was, in 1886, kidnapped by Russian partisans who carried him into Russia. Subsequently although he was allowed to return to Bulgaria, public opinion all over Europe having condemned the cowardly act of the Russian tools, he could no longer resist the bitter persecution of the Russian Emperor, who demanded his abdication. Thus forced by adverse circumstances, Prince Alexander left the country much to the sorrow and disappointment of all patriotic Bulgarians.

The election of Prince Ferdinand as his successor to the throne, though sanctioned by the National Assembly, could not receive the approval

of the Czar, who disliked the independent policy of the Bulgarian government. With the death of Premier Stambouloff, and the accession into power of Dr. Stoiloff, who represents the moderate wing of the Russophile element, Russia acknowledged him as the rightful ruler of united Bulgaria.

The liberation of the Greeks and the Roumanians, not falling within the limits of our retrospect, will not be discussed at this place. Of late years there have been several insignificant insurrections in Macedonia with a view of undermining Turkish rule in that province; but so far, without any perceptible success. The people, however, are longing for independence, and are only waiting for the signal which will call them to rise against their relentless oppressors. How far the recent claims of the Greeks, that they have a very large following in Macedonia ready to co-operate with them is correct, was seen in the late Greco-Turkish war and will be discussed in another chapter.

The revival of learning among the Balkan States as a result of the establishment of schools has unquestionably done a great deal of good in rousing the dormant spirit of the down-trodden nationalities. Many young men have already gone abroad in order to obtain a better equipment for the forthcoming struggle, and have done every-

thing in their power to disseminate the uplifting influence of freedom and progress among their own countrymen. It must be confessed, also, that missionaries have rendered invaluable aid toward the intellectual awakening of the people in Bulgaria, Greece, and Armenia, very largely through the instrumentality of educational institutions, and particularly of Robert College, located at Constantinople. The effect of the French Revolution, moreover, must have been felt in a measure in these provinces, as it was felt throughout western Europe. Then, too, the religious controversies, which had been raging for so many decades between the Greeks and the Bulgarians, and which culminated in the organization of the Bulgarian Exarchate in Constantinople, had a tendency to prepare the people for the great battle which was to be fought against their fierce enemy—the Turkish tyrant. Finally, the accession to power of weak and incompetent Sultans and administrative leaders brought about the complete disorganization of the Turkish army, and encouraged the subject races to work for their ultimate emancipation.


It will be seen that, notwithstanding the most cruel oppression of the Balkan nationalities for over 500 years, they succeeded in retaining their national traits and language, as well as the religion

of their forefathers, and may well pride themselves in being, so to speak, the bulwark of Christendom against the vehement incursions of the fanatical hordes of Mohammedanism.



CHAPTER III.

COMPARATIVE DEVELOPMENT.

F all the Balkan States, Servia was the first to enjoy the advantages of an independent existence. The Servian government has done much to ameliorate the condition of the people, who, for centuries, had been kept in ignorance and degradation through the blighting influence of Turkish domination.

The progress which the Servians have achieved during the last seventy-five years is, indeed, commendable, considering the fact that the great majority of them were poor, and unacquainted with the modern appliances, so essential to the rapid development of their resources. The Servians, as well as the rest of the Balkan nations, have been dependent, almost exclusively, upon the cultivation of the soil for their subsistence, and while the land is fertile and can yield abundantly, the instruments which they have at their disposal are too primitive and inadequate to meet present requirements; hence the extreme poverty of the Servian people.

What has been said of Servia will apply equally as well to Bulgaria, if not to all the provinces within the peninsula.

Yet, in spite of these drawbacks, both the Servians and the Bulgarians have made remarkable strides in the line of true progress and enlightenment. Free public schools have been established in every community; while education has been made compulsory for children of both sexes. The rising generations of these long forgotten lands may yet boast of men and women, noted for their culture and refinement. Fifty years ago, very few schools were to be found within this section devoted to the education of the Christian populations. To-day, schools of all grades are made accessible to all. The universities of Europe and America are not without a fair representation of young men and young women from those remote parts seeking higher education.

The form of government, too, among the Balkan States is thoroughly democratic, and quite in accord with the spirit of equality, so characteristic of these people from immemorial times. The social unrest of other countries, which is due to the unequal distribution of wealth and all the instruments of its production, is practically unknown among the people of this peninsula, since, as a rule, every farmer owns the land which he

needs for cultivation, and is most generally as well off as his neighbor. Besides, with the construction of railroads, industrial establishments, heretofore in their infancy, are commencing to grow and develop. New markets for the cereal products are thereby opened and secured by the farmers.

Laws for the preservation of forests, and the improvement of the land generally, are being enacted; and, in fact, no efforts are being spared by the governments of these countries to insure peace and prosperity to all the citizens alike. But despite the encouraging features, it must be acknowledged, that none of the Balkan States can compare very favorably with any of the western nations of Europe, either as to wealth or civilization; it could hardly be expected of them under existing conditions. And yet, while sincerely regretting the absence of many of the advantages which are enjoyed by the western nations of Europe, the young nations in the peninsula may derive some consolation from the knowledge that they are also free from those vices which go hand in hand with the so-called modern civilization. It is to be hoped that the men who are at the helm of these small states, in their eagerness to imitate European methods, will be judicious

enough to appropriate that which is good, and eliminate that which is evil.

A brief review of the financial and industrial conditions of these countries may be of some interest at this place.

The total *Servian* exports for the six years ending 1890 averaged \$7,945,000 annually, and consisted of plums, herds of swine, cattle and sheep, wheat and other cereals, hides, wine, wool and timber. The imports, consisting mostly of cottons and woollens, salt, iron, sugar, coffee, glass, paper, tobacco and machinery, ranged from \$10,339,000 in 1886 to \$6,625,500 in 1889. The foreign trade of Serbia is principally in the hands of Austria-Hungary and is concentrated at Belgrade. The country is rich in minerals which are not extracted to the extent that they might be. The railway, which runs along the valley of the Morava and connects Vienna with Constantinople, together with a few other short branch-lines, make a total of 334 miles of railway. The public revenue of Serbia in 1891 amounted to \$11,305,415 the expenditures to \$11,905,180, while the public debt for the same year amounted to \$76,102,145.*

The army, comprising all men who are capable of bearing arms between the ages of twenty and fifty, is divided into three classes. The standing

*Chamber's Encyclopedia.

army with a peace total of 14,000 and a war total of 70,000; the second and third classes each numbering 55,000.

The exports of *Montenegro* reach the annual value of \$1,000,000, and consist largely of cattle, goats, fruits and wine. The imports for the most part wheat, gunpowder and groceries average about \$100,000. The nation owes \$500,000 to Austria and \$350,000 to Russia. The income of the State barely reaches the sum of \$300,000 per annum. The expenditure is not known. The old militia has been converted into a standing army of 30,000 men. Only one hundred of them serve permanently as a body guard to the Prince.

Like the other Balkan States, *Bulgaria* has one of the freest constitutions in Europe, patterned after the Belgian. The National Assembly, however, has but one chamber, election to which is by universal manhood suffrage. The principal exports are cereals, and the imports live stock. One of the most thriving branches of native industry is the manufacture of attar of roses amounting to \$3,000,000 annually. The Bulgarian army contains about 29,000 on a peace footing; the war strength being nearly 200,000. The revenue of Bulgaria is \$10,750,000, and the expenditure about the same amount. It is needless to say that a corresponding advancement has been

made in Roumania and Greece, the other two states which, not many years ago, shared in common with Servia and Bulgaria the pernicious affects of Turkish misgovernment.

How is it with Macedonia and the other European provinces still remaining under the jurisdiction of the Sultan? Alas! no one outside of that region can appreciate the wretched condition of countless human beings, who, in the clutches of rapacious Turkish officials, bewail their earthly existence !

We have become already accustomed to read dispatches of Turkish plunders and depredations with imperturbable equanimity. The fact that thousands of Christians have perished by the sword of the Turk, in order to satisfy his blood-thirsty propensities, is no longer considered an unnatural proceeding. The balance of power among the European nations must be preserved at any sacrifice! What a stain on European diplomacy!

According to the treaty of Berlin all the people in Macedonia were promised undoubted relief in the form of personal liberty and a permanent liberation from further exactions on the part of the Turkish authorities; reforms that have never as yet been enforced. And yet, when the subjected people rise in revolt against their oppressors, and

by force of arms they attempt to defend their rights as men, some of the great powers are sure to interpose in behalf of the defiant Turks, under the pretext that they are anxious to preserve the balance of power, which is but a diplomatic way to express their own selfish designs upon the provinces that should be made free.

What then is the fate of the people in Macedonia? They have none of the blessings of their fellow countrymen in the free states. On the contrary, ever in dread of their lives, the Christians in Turkey are continually exposed to all sorts of indignities, taxed beyond measure; and even the honor and integrity of their own homes is left at the mercy of the brutal followers of Islam! The few schools which have sprung up here and there throughout Macedonia are subjected to the severest persecution, which often times borders on the ridiculous. For example, no books are permitted to be used in the schools that happen to have such words as "liberty," "union," "independence," etc., even though they have absolutely no connection with the suspected freedom, union and independence of the oppressed people. H₂O in chemistry has been stricken out from the text-books, on the ground that it is a secret designation of Hamid II, and may stir up rebellion among the rayahs. Both

teachers and scholars are daily thrown into prison for trifling causes. It is said that a student in the gymnasium at Salonica happened to have the picture of a Russian cavalry soldier, in consequence of which both he and his father are still pining in the dark dungeons of Asia Minor.

Travelling in Turkey is extremely dangerous, since a large body of Mussulmans make brigandage their life's work. During the summer months, they gather in groups and select the most strategic points in the country for the pursuit of their base avocation. They would not hesitate to destroy their victims if, by doing so, they could extract larger profits. Many distinguished travellers have been captured by these bandits and have been robbed of enormous sums of money before they could secure their release. A great many communities have been literally devastated by these professional bandits. As soon as winter comes they retire to their homes in order to enjoy, undisturbed, the ill-gotten profits of their summer expeditions. Is it to be supposed that these habitual robbers and murderers are prosecuted by the state? Not by any means. There are numberless instances where these bands of public plunderers have been given the tacit co-operation of the officials themselves, who, in a great many cases, must depend upon the bribes which they get

from these bandits for the maintenance of their own families ; non-payment of salaries being one of the weakest spots in the system of Turkish administration. If there be a Christian subject, who is courageous enough to demand redress through judicial channels for some indignities he may have received at the hands of a Mohammedan, he is doomed to certain failure ; in all probability he may have to expiate with his own head for having presumed to expect justice from a Turk before a Turkish court! No wonder the people in Macedonia are poor and miserable, for can there be such a thing as right under the Turkish rule? The old adage that "no grass will grow where Turkish foot has stepped" is perfectly applicable in the case of Turkish misgovernment in Macedonia and Thrace.



CHAPTER IV.

ELEMENTS OF DISCORD.

WHY is it that these small, struggling nationalities have been unable thus far to fuse into one strong, vigorous confederation that would have put an end to the interminable Eastern Question? That is undoubtedly the question that many people are asking from time to time, being unaware of the fierce racial conflicts which are going on unceasingly among the different nationalities inhabiting this strategic portion of the globe. They seem to forget, for the time being, that there is a wall of separation between these people, and that it may require many years of heroic efforts to demolish it. Indeed, it will be fortunate for them, can they survive to that day; but who can foretell whether another state, mightier than Turkey, may not crush them all down, so that they may never rise again as free and independent states?

One of the elements of discord, which seems to estrange these peoples, is a traditional hatred that is still lingering in their breasts. Is it possible for

a Greek, a proud descendant of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle and a host of the other great names of ancient Greece, to look upon the Bulgarian as his equal? Not at all. He calls him "Vulgaros hon-drokepholos"—the "thick-headed Bulgarian"—with the utmost contempt. He would not so much as admit that a Bulgarian could be cultivated and made as noble as himself. In order to show to what extent racial prejudices seem to sway the minds of the Greeks generally, we need only cite a few words from a letter of an Athenian savant addressed to E. de Laveleye. He affirmed in his own bombastic style, peculiar to his race, "You are mistaken about the Bulgarians, they are barbarians and such they will remain." It may have been so in his eyes but the testimony of all disinterested publicists has been almost entirely in favor of the Bulgarians, who are lauded for being "modest, peaceable, industrious and progressive people." The Greek dislikes the Bulgarian because the latter will not yield to Hellenic influences, choosing rather to remain a Bulgarian; and so long as he remains a Bulgarian the Greek cannot hope to realize the restoration of the great Byzantine Empire, the fondest dream of his life. Nor does the Greek have any special liking for the other neighboring people, whom he has been taught to regard as full-fledged barbarians. This

ignoble trait, in the character of the Greeks, to depreciate the worth of people of other nationalities, does not recommend them favorably to their many admirers ; since the average Greek is in no sense superior to the average Bulgarian, and there are some who would consider him inferior both as to physical and mental equipment.

The Bulgarian on the other hand is equally to be censured for his undisguised hostility to the Greek. He looks upon him as his eternal foe ; forgetting all the while that both are pursuing the same goal and that both need each other's co-operation. The Bulgarian refuses to recognize the good qualities of the Greek ; he would rather think of him as the descendant of the brutal Greeks of the middle ages, who, at the instigation of Basil II., better known as the Slayer of the Bulgarians, put out the eyes of 15,000 Bulgarians, leaving but one in every hundred men with a single eye to lead them back to their homes. It must have been a sombre procession ; and even though centuries may have elapsed since the tragedy, it remains fresh in the memory of every Bulgarian. Racial prejudices tend to intensify this existing estrangement, so that the advantages that might readily be derived from a concerted action against their real oppressors are sacrificed vainly in fruitless quarrels.

The Servians and the Bulgarians being of the same race have been until quite recently very friendly with each other. The Albanians and Tzintzars, on the other hand, being isolated upon the hills and mountains, have never been able to come into closer contact with the rest of the subjugated people in European Turkey and could, therefore, contribute very little to the cause of freedom within this troubled territory.

Then, the religious conflict between the Greeks and their patriarch at Constantinople on the one hand, and the remaining Christians in Turkey on the other, forms an interesting chapter in the history of these nationalities. It will be remembered that after the conquest of the Balkan States by the Turks, the Sublime Porte, being unacquainted with the habits and the social peculiarities of its Christian subjects, resolved to extricate itself from further annoyances by offering the Pontificate of the Eastern Church to the highest bidder. This supreme Pontiff was expected to become the official representative of the wishes of all the Christians who were found under the jurisdiction of the Sultan. The Greek Patriarch was shrewd enough to secure this exalted office by selling the bishoprics, the bishops in their turn sold their respective parishes to the people ; while the over-taxed rayahs had to pay " the cost of this cascade

of simoniacal transactions.''' The Bulgarian Church, hitherto independent, in 1767 became wholly subserviant to the rule of Greek bishops, who were in no way concerned as to the spiritual welfare of the Bulgarians. Their chief aim was to extort as much money from them as they could, in order to enrich themselves and their friends. A large portion of the money, which was thus received from the good-natured, but ignorant worshippers, was used in the suppression of their own language and nationality. The churches, which up to this time had been using the Bulgarian, Servian and Albanian languages, were now forced to discard them, and to use in their stead only the Greek. When early in this century the Turkish government ordered all communes to erect schools, and that the people should be taught in their native tongue, the Greek bishops disapproved of the plan on the ground that schools are apt to make men revolutionists, and that it would be far better to spend the money in building churches. There can be no doubt that these crafty Phanariots did everything in their power to Hellenize the subject races under their ecclesiastical rule, but without any permanent success.

The Servians were the first to renounce the arbitrary pretensions of the Patriarch by declar-

ing the metropolitan of Belgrade the sole spiritual head of the nation, severing thereby all connections with Greek ecclesiasticism.

The Roumanians also found the dictatorship of the Phanariote bishops unendurable, and declared likewise, their independence from the Patriarch.

Later on, the Bulgarians inaugurated a determined attack against their religious chiefs, who were ignorant of despised and their language. This struggle on the part of the Bulgarians continued for fifteen years, until finally in 1869 they regained their ecclesiastical autonomy. The head of their national church is known by the title of the 'Bulgarian Exarch,' and resides at Constantinople. According to the imperial firman he enjoys the right of filling the bishoprics wherever the population is shown to be exclusively Bulgarian. This rule has not always been complied with, however, owing to the fact that the Turks feared the strength of the Bulgarian element, and felt reluctant to grant them any prerogatives that would tend to arouse their national self-consciousness. This has been especially noticeable since the reawakening of the Bulgarian people thirty years ago. In speaking of the injustice of this cruel treatment of the Bulgarians, Emile de Lavelye, in his admirable work on the Balkan Peninsula, remarks :

“The Treaty of Berlin guaranteed to the Christians of the Ottoman Empire liberty of conscience and freedom of worship ; consequently it gave to the Bulgarians the right to belong to the Church of their choice. Notwithstanding the recent arrangement, and notwithstanding the firman of 1869, which contained the formal promise of the Porte, these unhappy people are still kept under the yoke of the Greek bishops, who are leagued against them with the Turks. They shut the schools and the churches built with the savings of the Bulgarians ; they imprison or exile their popes, and treat their schoolmasters even worse. All means of moral and intellectual culture are refused them.”

The Greeks are bitterly disappointed in having failed to bring all these people, once under their ecclesiastical control, into the Hellenic fold. They can have no sympathy for them in their endeavors to obtain their rights as nations, and are in turn hated by them for their domineering attitude in past years. Quite a number of Bosnians and Albanians, and even a few thousand Bulgarians and Servians, have joined the Roman Catholic Church in order to escape the tyranny of the Greek Patriarch.

Foreign agitators, who for years have been.

traversing the Balkan States in various directions and at different times in behalf of their respective governments, have done much to create discord between these nationalities, which ought to be in perfect harmony. It is curious to watch the intrigues which some of the great nations of Europe have employed in order to influence the course of events in these contending nationalities. Russia, in particular, has done much in this direction. Twice since the liberation of Bulgaria the Czar has presumed to direct her foreign policy, even though his interference was contrary to the wishes of the people in that country. It is well known that Prince Alexander was personally recommended to the Bulgarian throne by the Russian Emperor, Alexander II., who supposed he would become a willing tool of Russian designs in the Balkan peninsula. When, in 1884, the Prince resisted the haughty dictations of the Russian ministers in Bulgaria, he at once lost the favor of the Russian Court. Premier Stambouloff, realizing the selfish schemes which seemed to animate the Russian diplomatists, turned to Austria and England for the moral support which he needed in directing a purely national policy. "Bulgaria for Bulgarians" now became the universal cry throughout the land. For eight years he defied, single-handed, the imperious threats of the Czar,

who sought in vain to re-establish Russian prestige in Bulgaria. With the fall of Stambouloff the country succumbed once more to Russian pressure; so that the present government derives its inspiration almost entirely from St. Petersburg.

Servia, likewise, has had the protecting care of some great power at one time or another. During the reign of King Milan, Austria seemed to dictate Servia's foreign policy, which at times has proved fatal to Servia's interests; in 1885 it brought ruin and disgrace upon that country. When, twelve years ago, the union of Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia was proclaimed and accomplished, the Austrian diplomatists, who were doubtless entertaining hopes of future expansion toward Salonica, looked upon the Bulgarian union as inimical to their cherished dreams, and for that reason incited the Servians to overrun the northwestern section of the principality, believing thereby they might reinstate the old order of things. Russia, too, heartily approved of this movement. It appeared, however, that the Servians underestimated the strength of their rivals and were shortly afterwards forced to retreat in dismay, being saved from complete destruction by the timely interposition of Austria. Soon King Milan was forced to abdicate in behalf of his son Alexander. The Servian reverses, due in

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part to the selfish policy of Austrian statesmen in provoking a needless war against their kinsmen, the Bulgarians, seem to have caused a reaction within the minds of the Servian people, who, of late years, have again turned to Russia for guidance.

Montenegro has always been known as the obedient instrument of Russia's petty schemes in the East. The father of the reigning Czar, a few years ago, in commenting upon the loyalty of Nikita, the Prince of Montenegro, remarked with significant solemnity, that he is the only trustworthy ally upon whom Russia may at all times place full reliance.

Roumania is known to have attached herself to the Triple Alliance, ever since the unfair treatment to which she was subjected, as a result of the war of 1877-78. Roumania's services to Russia, in that memorable attack on Plevna, were indispensable to Russian success; and yet, the Czar did not hesitate to take from her the province of Bessarabia in exchange for Dobrudja, a much less desirable district, so far as Roumania's welfare was concerned. The Roumanians could not forget this act of ingratitude on the part of Russia. Besides, they have had ample opportunity to discover that Russia's southward movements do not augur

well for the safety and well-being of the Roumanian people.

As long as Servia and Bulgaria pursued an independent policy, Roumania was always ready to co-operate with them in the preservation of peace between the Balkan States. As soon as these two Slavonic nations surrendered to the base dictation of Russian emissaries, Roumania was compelled to withhold her sympathies from them, and it now looks for support almost entirely to Austria in the event of possible hostilities in the East.

Greece, too, has been inclined to look upon Russia as her benefactress, owing largely to the blood relationship subsisting between the courts of Athens and of St. Petersburg; but even the Greeks have come to lose confidence in the good-will of Russia, particularly as they are well aware that the Russians would naturally side with their hated rivals—the Bulgarians and the Servians—should a struggle for the possession of Macedonia take place; for Macedonia, after all, is the real bone of contention between the most important nationalities inhabiting the Balkan peninsula. At present Macedonia forms by far the largest portion of Turkey in Europe.

As the Turks may be expected at any moment to evacuate Europe, the question as to the ulti-

mate apportionment of the disputed territory becomes one of vital importance.

The Greeks are conspicuous by their loud pretensions with regard to Macedonia. Once it formed, they claim, a part of the great Byzantine Empire; and ever since its subjection to the Turkish rule, the Greeks have been, according to the Patriarch, the great civilizing factor among the Christian population of the province. The schools of the natives, who were not Greeks, were summarily suppressed. Throughout the Peninsula the Patriarch sought to introduce the Greek language in all the Christian Churches; these latter in time had to acknowledge his jurisdiction by virtue of his official capacity, the Sultan having accorded him the exalted title of Pontiff over all his Christian subjects. There was a time when the Greek patriots, in their zeal to bring into realization the great Hellenic idea, proclaimed, in a very energetic manner, that the entire peninsula was inhabited by Greeks only, when they should have said by submissive adherents of the Greek Church.

It was due manifestly to this ambiguous assertion that a large portion of the Christian world, as well as the entire Greek nation, have been led to the belief that the Macedonians are real Greeks, speaking the Greek language

and are, moreover, heartily in sympathy with the idea of pan-Hellenic union. This unfortunate blunder caused them much disappointment in the late Greco-Turkish war; for the insurrection, they so confidently expected, among the Macedonian people, never occurred, simply because those people were not in sympathy with Greek aspirations. In Roumania, Servia and Bulgaria, these ardent advocates of the "megale idea" (great idea) admit that there may be a few Roumanians, Servians and Bulgarians, respectively; but the Greeks predominate, of course. The time is not far off when the untiring promulgators of Hellenism will discover, to their great sorrow, the unwelcome truth that even Macedonia is not settled wholly by Greeks, but that there are a few Bulgarians, Servians and Albanians there, until finally a strong conviction must dawn upon their minds that, in reality, there are very few Greeks in Macedonia. If the "great idea" which seems to have animated them in the happy days of yore, does not rest on firmer foundation, it must vanish away in the face of recent investigations.

What are the arguments which the Greeks are in the habit of advancing in support of their claims with reference to Macedonia? They insist on the "ethnocratic pre-eminence." This argu-

ment may have had some weight in the dark ages, but will not avail them much to-day. It has been condemned everywhere as altogether too ridiculous. We have already shown the shallowness of such arguments. A mere glance at the comparative progress of the Greeks and Slavs in recent years is sufficient to stigmatize them as groundless beyond measure.

The second argument, and one that appears to be quite ingenious on the surface, was expounded by the Greek minister in London in 1885, and is to the effect that "as the land formerly belonged to the Hellenes, its present occupation by Bulgarians does not suffice to justify its being adjudged to them. The right of the Greeks is imprescriptible." Emile deLaveleye, the noted publicist, refutes the argument by saying that "if this were true, New Holland, New Zealand, Tasmania, having been discarded by the Dutch, ought to belong to Holland, because these countries have Dutch names. The English have colonized them, but that gives them no right of possession. It is difficult to discuss such theories, and distressing even to have to notice them."

The only reasonable basis on which the Greeks can build their claims to Macedonia would be to prove that the Greeks form the majority of the population of the province. This prodigious task

has been undertaken, it would seem, by M. Sanpolos, an Athenian professor, who has declared that there are 500,000 Greeks, 100,000 Bulgarians and 40,000 Jews. It is needless to say that no data in support of his proposition were ever presented. Many learned Greeks in our day are tempted to make extravagant claims in favor of the Greek nationality in Macedonia, without being able to adduce any proof therefor.

We do not deny that there are Greeks, or better Hellenized Christians, in Macedonia, but we say that their number is insignificant. In Salonica and a few other towns along the coast of the Ægean Sea, the Greeks outnumber the other races; but these sections form but a small part of the province, as we shall presently see. Statistics based on Turkish figures, in 1881, place the number of Greeks for all of Macedonia at 57,480, out of a total population of 1,863,382. Herr Ritter, the noted German geographer, has placed the number of the Greeks in Macedonia at 59,833.

Baker has made a very liberal estimate of the number of Greeks by conceding 100,000 souls. Even sections which border very closely upon the Greek frontier, and are spoken of as being inhabited by Greeks are known with absolute certainty, to contain no Greeks whatever. Geo. Finlay, in his history of Greece, in describing the national

affiliations of the people in Ochrida and its vicinity, says : "All the Christians in Ochrida (Achrida) itself, and its neighborhood, as far west as Struga, where the Black Drin issues from the lake of Ochrida, are Bulgarians and speak Bulgarian. The population of the city, which amounts to about 15,000 persons, is nearly equally divided between Bulgarian Christians and Mahometan Albanians."*

The Servians also have claimed Macedonia with remarkable pertinacity. They base their pretensions upon the old argument that several centuries ago, King Dushan, the Servian hero, conquered and ruled Macedonia for a few decades. We need not enter into an exhaustive exposition of facts in order to prove the fallacy of their argument, since it is obvious that on such grounds the Greeks have a better right to their claims on Macedonia than the Servians, whose rule in that province did not last but a few years. So far as Old Servia is concerned, no one will dispute their right to its possession, providing under the term "Old Servia" we include the districts inhabited by pure Servians, such as Ipek and the surrounding territory, but not Macedonia proper, including Scopia, as has been urged by many Servians. It is hard to understand why some high-minded

*Geo. Finlay, History of Greece, p. 28, Vol IV. Note 4

Servians are trying to organize a great Servian Empire out of provinces in which there are no Servians, whereas they might, with a greater degree of success, work for the establishment of a powerful Servo-Croat State, through the amalgamation of all the Servians, Montenegrins, Slavonians and Dalmatians, all speaking practically the same language.

The Albanians are entitled to the western strip of Macedonia, since the region from the Drin to Prisrend is inhabited by people of that race, often times intermingled with Bulgarians and Tzintzars. The Servians, Albanians and Tzintzars together, according to Herr Ritter, number about 422,357 souls, the majority being Albanians.

There are also 360,000 Mohammedans, quite a number being Bulgarians, who adopted the faith of Islam and are known as Pomacs.

From what has been said it is easy to infer that the Bulgarians constitute by far the largest proportion of the people in Macedonia, their number exceeding one million.

This assertion is confirmed by the testimony of reliable writers on the subject, among whom Cyprien Robert who said : "Macedonia has Seres for its capital and abuts on the Bay of Contesse and Mount Athose. Thus Bulgaria debouches on two seas; through Varna it is in commercial re-

lation with Russia and Asia; through Seres and Salonica with Greece and all parts of Southern Europe."

William of Tyre in the 12th century said: "The Bulgarian nation occupies all the space between the Danube and the Adriatic as far as Constantinople, so that all this country with a width of ten day's marching and a length of thirty is called Bulgaria."

Lejar in his "Ethnography of Turkey in Europe" said - "In Macedonia the Bulgarians have conquered almost everywhere, and they have, by degrees, driven back the Hellenes toward the sea."

Even Bismark himself speaking on the Eastern Question on February 19, 1878, remarked: "The ethnographic position of Bulgaria, as I know it from authentic sources, and as it is shown by the best map we know, that of Kiepert, is such that its national limits extend almost unbroken to beyond Salonica toward the west, and with a slight admixture of Turkish elements as far as the Black Sea toward the east."

Finally, E. deLaveleye suggests that "All the efforts of the Phanariote clergy, supported by the money of the Greeks in Athens and Constantinople, to maintain their supremacy and to Hellenize the Bulgarians of Macedonia will not succeed. It is too late; the national sentiment has awakened

in these unhappy beings, so long crushed under a double yoke; they see their brothers of Bulgaria and Roumelia set free, and they hope to be free in their turn also."

The claims of Bulgaria to Macedonia are based on several considerations, the most important of which is that the bulk of the people in Macedonia call themselves Bulgarians; that they speak the Bulgarian language; that they cherish the Bulgarian literature and sing Bulgarian songs; that they wear Bulgarian costumes; that they maintain Bulgarian schools and acknowledge the Bulgarian church, in spite of all sufferings and persecutions on the part of the Greeks and Turks; and lastly because they are earnestly hoping and working in common with all Bulgarians for the realization of their greatest of all national ideals—which finds its highest exemplification in the Treaty of St. Stephano—a great, free and united Bulgaria.

PART IV.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS.

WE have already shown why Turkey in Europe is doomed, and why her partition is only a question of time. Who will deny that but for the conflicting interests of the great powers in the division of Turkish territory, the long expected disruption of the Ottoman empire would have taken place a long time ago? The smallest spark of discord among these diversified elements is sufficient to set ablaze the entire Balkan peninsula.

The critical moment is fast approaching. What will then be the probable solution of this troublesome problem? This interesting question will form the subject matter of the four succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER I.

RUSSIAN PROSPECTS.

THE most prevalent belief with learned men, who have taken a deep interest in the course of events in the east, during the last twenty years, seems to be that Russia will eventually succeed in establishing her authority over the Balkan peninsula with Constantinople as the culmination of her persistent endeavors. This certainly does not appear wholly improbable, in view of Russia's repeated efforts during the present century to plant as soon as possible her standard on the Bosphorous. It is true, that Russian diplomatists have always tried to give plausible excuses for attacking the infamous power of the Turk; nevertheless, in undertaking these costly expeditions, Russia's real motive has been new acquisitions of territory. The question seems to resolve itself into this: will Russia eventually triumph in her eastern policy? And if so, will it be a desirable thing for the subject races, now under the authority of the Sultan?

There can be no doubt that, of late years, Russia has been gaining preponderant influence throughout the Balkans and that the eastern policy of the European powers is in a large degree subservient to the dictates of His Imperial Majesty, the Czar of Russia. This becomes even clearer when we consider the domineering attitude of Russia with reference to the recent negotiations on the Cretan question. The Czar demands the appointment of a governor over that island, who shall be of the Greek Orthodox faith, and the other powers concur without hesitation. The suggestions of the Czar have been of paramount importance in directing the actions of the remaining powers, comprising the European concert.

Both in 1853 and 1877, Russia sent her vast armies into the Turkish territory that she might the sooner realize her long cherished ambition—the occupation of the Balkan peninsula. On both occasions, however, the Russians were deprived of the fruits of their enterprise, and while they may be waiting still for an opportune hour to strike the mortal blow at the Ottoman government, it is hardly likely that Russia will be allowed to capture Constantinople. Even the Russians themselves are beginning to appreciate the hopelessness of this yearning. Speaking on this subject, “The St. Petersburg Viedomosti,” an offi-

ical organ of the Russian government, in a January number of 1896, disavowed all purposes on the part of the Russian government to encroach upon the Balkans. This paper concludes by saying that the Russian nation has much grander prospects in the far East than to waste her resources in futile attempts upon the Sick Man's possessions any longer. Whether this official newspaper was voicing the sentiment, which inspires in reality the Russian government, is very questionable, since it is an open secret that Russian statesmen are not prone to scruple very much about employing "diplomatic language" in order to carry their points. The Russians have persistently claimed that in fighting the Turks they have had no other motives than the liberation of the Slavs and the protection of the Orthodox nations from their oppressors. It is true that such generous impulses have actuated a great number of the Russian people, but it is hardly consistent with the facts of history to say that no other motives have inspired the minds of the Czar's counselors in undertaking the destructive wars of former years against the Turks. If it were true that Russia is aspiring merely to achieve the liberation of the Slavonic nationalities, why is it that the Czar disapproved of the union of the Bulgarians in 1885?

Why is it that Russia opposes the fondest dreams of the Slavonic people to be reunited with their countrymen in Macedonia? And if it were true that Russia is seeking merely to shield the Christians of the Orthodox faith, why is it that she consented to champion the cause of the Turks in conjunction with the European powers against the unfortunate Greeks, who were struggling heroically to save their Cretan brothers from the Turkish sword and depredations?

In view of these flagrant inconsistencies, we cannot but characterize Russian diplomacy in the East as being either very stupid, or else infamous beyond description. It is only through an appeal to the ineradicable prejudices of the ignorant people that the present governments of Bulgaria and Servia are enabled to pursue a decidedly pro-Russian policy, even though it is apparent that such a course be directly opposed to the highest interests of the people inhabiting the Balkan States. It was at the time of the late Greco-Turkish war, if ever, that these governments could have joined the Greek for a final and resolute attack upon the Turkish semi-barbarous hordes, in order that their down-trodden brothers in Macedonia might be emancipated; this unfortunately they were unwilling to do, having promised to obey the Russian autocrat, who would have

them fold their arms and watch the Turks advancing into Greek territory. What a stain on Christian manhood ! Where was Stambouloff at this critical moment to rouse the southern Slavs from their lethargic state, into which they have been thrown by the Russophile agitators ? Bulgaria under his regency stood recalcitrant to Russia's authority and succeeded in maintaining her position as an independent country. This great Bulgarian kept the Russian diplomatists at bay for ten years and made his country loved and respected by all freedom-loving people.

Stambouloff was assassinated at the instigation of these aristocratic Russophiles, who in the oppression of the masses expect to grow fatter and more powerful. The Russian statesmen are famous for their intrigues; but nowhere have they exceeded their skill in this direction, so much as in the late conflict between Greece and Turkey. Realizing the possibility of all patriotic Bulgarians joining the Greeks in the event of a Greco-Turkish war, the Russian agents in Sophia beguiled the present Bulgarian Premier, Dr. Stoiloff, to deliver an insulting harangue against Roumania, in the Bulgarian National Assembly, on the ground that her government has been maltreating the Bulgarians in Dobroudja. The significance of this move on the part of Russia could readily be conjectured.

Roumania was always known to have been friendly to Bulgaria. Russia has ever sought to baffle the designs of these Balkan States with respect to European Turkey by generating strife and contention among them in order to leave them weak and helpless.

By provoking the hostility of the Roumanians against Bulgaria just at the time when the latter's attention should have been directed toward Macedonia solely, the Russians succeeded in distracting the Bulgarians from their intended onslaught upon the Turks. It was a great stroke of Russian diplomacy; for instead of fighting the Turks, who were attacked by the Greeks on the south, the Bulgarians were obliged to watch the Roumanians on the north.

Dr. Stotoiloff, who thus became the willing tool of Russian despotism in the Balkans, may have to regret some day his unworthy conduct. But of what avail will it be to the Bulgarians then, now that the most favorable opportunity to emancipate their countrymen in Macedonia has slipped by? That Russia has deep-laid designs upon Turkey there is no doubt, but how far she will succeed in carrying them out, is another question.

It has been England's chief desire to frustrate Russia's advances upon the Bosphorus,

and thus far she has been enabled to do so, partly by force of arms, partly by means of diplomacy. This is fully illustrated in the Crimean war and the Treaty of Berlin. How much longer England will be able to withstand Russia's encroachments we are not able to predict; but we are still inclined to believe that England cannot afford to retract her well-defined policy, the unflinching opposition to all Russian aggressions toward Constantinople. This course she is compelled to assume in order to protect her own interests in the East. At the same time we should not overlook the prevailing tendency among some of the English statesmen, and particularly so among those of the liberal fold, to make an end of the Ottoman empire by surrendering Constantinople to Russia, while retaining a firm grasp on the Suez canal. It is generally believed, however, that England will not now abandon her traditional policy of opposition to Russia's expansion to the southeast, knowing that Constantinople is, in a special sense, the key to both Europe and Asia. It would be needless to argue that Austria-Hungary, too, being directly interested in the solution of this puzzling question, will strongly counteract any movement on the part of Russia in the direction of the Levant.

A Vienna publicist in a late number of "Preuss.

sische Jahrbucher," expresses an opinion that Austria would never allow Russia to occupy Constantinople itself, but might permit the occupation of Scutari, the Asiatic side of the city.

The interests of France and Russia in the East are by no means identical. France wants Syria and Palestine and this Russia would strenuously oppose; for the latter could not allow a Roman Catholic power to have any control over the sacred ground, which must be the future heritage of Russia's autocrat and the protector of the Orthodox faith. Neither could France endure the thought of Russian supremacy over the Mediterranean Sea.

Germany is perhaps the only great power that would offer no resistance to Russia's eastern schemes. The favorite plan of the Hohenzollern family is to maintain friendly relations with the Russian court. Besides, Russia's absorption of the southern Slavs will of necessity enfeeble Austria-Hungary and may eventually bring about the annexation of Austria to Germany and thus effect the unification of all Germanic people under the same government. This plan is said to have originated in the mind of Prince Bismark. Moreover, France's hostility to Germany would dictate the expediency of a pacification of Russian greed; hence, Germany may be willing to tolerate

Russia's aggressions in south-eastern Europe provided that the latter would in return lend her aid to Germany in the event of a conflict with France.

Even then new complications are liable to arise, 'since the German people would discover that greater Russia is more to be dreaded than their French neighbors; especially as the Slavs are known to be inspired with an undying hatred for the German race and may readily be induced to attack Germany under favorable conditions. This possible danger, emanating from such a combination of circumstances, should not be lost sight of by German statesmen, in considering the solution of the Eastern Question.

But even in the event of the European powers permitting Russia's southward movement unimpeded, it is highly probable that the small states, which have sprung up in the Balkan peninsula, will unite in a common effort at self preservation. They all seem to be equally imbued with the spirit of freedom, and now that they have experienced in a measure the fruits of self-government, they will not readily consent to be led like serfs. The peninsula bristles with mountains, the defiles of which would become impassable were the local governments to agree to close them against the enemy. Russia must have learned by this time that the Balkan states mean

to govern themselves and should she venture to impose her despotic practices over them, she will then find among them some of the most desperate "nihilists" with whom she has ever had to deal.

Were we to admit the possibility of an ultimate Russian occupation of the peninsula, a new question forces itself upon our attention : how will it affect the future of these long-suffering nationalities? One thing we may surmise. Peace will reign throughout, but it will be only at the cost of all the sacred rights to which free men are entitled. Alas for the subject peoples, for it will only be the peace of slaves who must learn how to obey. Those among the more intelligent classes who dare think and act for themselves in accord with the dictates of their conscience, must share the fate of the many thousands now sinking in the Siberian dungeons. Intolerance and superstition will become rampant throughout this region; while the country as a whole will be thrown several centuries behind.

Is it probable that Russia will accord special privileges to the southern Slavs? Let the treatment of the unfortunate Poles in Russia be the convincing answer to that question.

The severest blow to all thinking subjects of the Czar, however, in the event of Russian occu-

pation in the Balkans, would be the bitter recollection that while under the unbearable yoke of the Turk, the people might have hoped to regain their independence at some future time; under Russian tyranny, never! The only alternative then remaining for these unhappy millions would be the hope that a tremendous social revolution may sweep out of existence the oppressive regime now prevalent in Russia, and liberate the countless human beings that are now or may yet be groaning under Russian despotism; but even that welcome boon can hardly be expected in the very near future. Let us hope, then, for the sake of humanity that Russia may never succeed in planting her standard on the Bosphorus.



CHAPTER II.

AUSTRIA'S POSITION.

IT is urged by some that Austria is seeking to occupy Macedonia, including Salonica, as soon as a favorable opportunity presents itself. This was denied by Titza, the well-known Hungarian statesman who affirmed that Austria-Hungary was not desirous of increasing the number of Slavonic people, already too numerous in comparison with the other races of the empire. Prominent men of that country have at different times declared that Austria can not entertain any proposals having for their ultimate end the division of European Turkey between Russia and Austria, the former to dominate Constantinople, and the latter Salonica with its adjacent district. Of course, all such statements, proceeding from diplomatic sources, must be received with a great deal of reservation; for the ways of diplomacy are often dark and devious, and particularly so in the latter part of the nineteenth century. There are many political and commercial considerations which have so in-

volved the Austrian empire in Eastern Europe that a descent upon the Balkan plains in the direction of Salonica is, to say the least, highly probable. Austria did not seem averse to the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and there is no reason why she should hesitate to invade Macedonia, were she measurably sure of success. The possession of Novi-Bazar, quite a strategic point, and the concentration of Austrian forces therein are evidently intended for some such contingency. The recent league concluded between the three Balkan States, had for its object the defeat of Austrian designs upon the peninsula; for who would suppose that Austria would discourage Bulgarian and Servian propagandists in Macedonia, but for her secret ambition of seizing the province herself?

That the Austrian rule would prove beneficial to these grief-stricken inhabitants of Turkey, there can be little doubt. It certainly would be much preferable to the Russian absolutism; but that it will prove permanent is very doubtful. In order to hold these heterogenous elements together, Austria must concede to them local self-government; and yet a guarantee of such rights would mean the establishment of schools and social institutions, and who will doubt for a moment that the introduction of such agencies,

is bound to arouse the national aspirations of these communities into fresh vigor and activity? In Greece, Bulgaria and Roumania the religious and intellectual awakening of their respective peoples preceeded almost invariably the political awakening; and what assurance does Austria possess that the Macedonian Bulgarians will not demand that they be joined to their countrymen in Thrace and Moesia under one and the same state? Besides, the Slavonic agitation which grows stronger day by day, involves the lands now under Austrian rule as well as those under Turkey. The rise and progress of the national spirit in modern times is irresistible even under the freest forms of government, let alone the Austrian, which is anything but ideal as yet.



CHAPTER III.

THE PAN-SLAVONIC UNION.

WHAT the Slavonic peoples are on the threshold of a new era, no one, who has studied closely their history and watched carefully the course of events, will doubt for a moment. There is an undercurrent of Pan-Slavonic agitation which finds its highest realization in the breasts of all young and intelligent Slavs. Even General Skobeleff expressed a desire that the day may soon dawn when the Slavonic federation will become an accomplished fact. His plan was to form of each individual nation an independent state, with a supreme central government. The Russian state being by far the strongest among the Slavonic states, would naturally assume the role, which is now held by Prussia in the German federation. It is a plausible solution, to be sure, were it not for the insuperable difficulties that may be confronted in its process of formation. There is a conservative element in Russia and in Moscow, particularly, which is bitterly opposed to this Pan-Slavonic

agitation. This party, which is exerting a powerful influence over the Russian emperor, maintains that no war should be undertaken that does not have for its prime end the extension of purely Russian despotism. Russia must conquer and assimilate. This policy is being adhered to within the Russian borders to-day. The Poles and the people of Bessarabia are complaining of the Russian governors that they are trying to obliterate their mother tongue and to make them Russians. This tendency on the part of the Russian authorities is a serious objection in the way of a Pan-Slavonic federation. Then, the fact that the Slavs have neither a common language, nor even a common alphabet, would prove an insurmountable obstacle in the organization of the proposed Slavonic conglomeration.

The Russians, Servians, Bulgarians and a portion of the Croatians, use the Cyrillic alphabet, while the remaining nationalities of the Slavonic race use the Latin.

Furthermore, the difference in the religious beliefs of these nationalities constitutes the greatest barrier to their harmonious unification. The principles of the Catholic Church are not in accord with those of the Eastern Church; which latter predominate in Russia and the Balkan states. Another stumbling block to the cherished union

of Slavs is to be found in the interposition of Hungary and Roumania, completely severing the northwestern from the southeastern branches of the Slavonic family.

Thus we are forced to conclude that no Pan-Slavonic union is possible as long as Russia persists in her present system of government and as long as the Slavonic people are not sufficiently enlightened to overcome all the religious and traditional prejudices that now separate them so effectually.



PART V.

THE PROPER SOLUTION.

NOW it is our duty to propound such a solution of the Eastern Question as would be acceptable to the vast majority of the people immediately concerned, proposing such a readjustment of difficulties in the Balkan peninsula as would cause the minimum of discontent.

There are two principles in the history of nations which seem to be working side by side. One is the tendency to decentralization in which case we see allied communities, cities and provinces preferring to remain independent states. The other consists in the centralization of political authority and the formation of one state out of several nationalities which have similar interests and proclivities. The former is said to represent a lower type of political development, and the latter a more advanced one. It is easy to see that the ideal of the principle which tends to unite homogenous peoples would be the federation of mankind. We should remember this in endeavoring to reach an equitable solution for the Balkan States.

CHAPTER I.

SELF-GOVERNING STATES.

WE are well aware that the present stage of development in the political life of the people in the Balkan States would hardly justify us in expecting the voluntary federalization of the several nationalities, even though their interests are known to be identical. The people are not sufficiently advanced in the arts of government to appreciate the benefits that would accrue from an amalgamation, be it of one form or another.

The best thing that can be done under the circumstances is to encourage the establishment of independent states. Let the people shape their own destinies and they will gradually rise to a higher plane of political development. The admirable way in which these free states in the peninsula have conducted their internal affairs hitherto is an irrefutable proof of their fitness to govern themselves. Indeed, the advancement made by these states has surpassed the expectation of

their most sanguine friends, even though they have been harassed by the domineering attitude of the great powers.

The construction of railroads and telegraphs; the erection of schools and the adoption of all the agencies of civilization, attest in the most emphatic manner, the ability of these people to rule themselves. It is no more than just that these small nations be accorded the same rights of self-government that are enjoyed by greater European nations. Now that Roumania, Servia, Greece, Bulgaria and Montenegro have been recognized as free states, why not allow similar rights to the people of Macedonia and Roumelia? The most practical adjustment of difficulties in the East would be to allow the territory now inhabited by a majority of Bulgarians in Macedonia to be annexed to Bulgaria; the territory settled by a larger number of Servians, to Servia; and that by Greeks, to Greece. The suggestion offered by Lord Derby, a long time ago, in regard to the establishment of autonomous administrative centres throughout Macedonia, is fraught with grave dangers for the people since none of the Balkan states will agree to relinquish its claims to these contested regions. now under Turkey, until all shall have been fused with their respective countries.

Another complex problem confronts us at this juncture : What shall become of those regions where no particular race predominates, but where there is an intermixture of different nationalities, such as Monastir, Salonica and Constantinople? It is needless to urge the indispensableness of an arrangement whereby the coast should form an integral part of the adjoining state, having control of the inland districts. Thus, it would be absurd to give Monastir, Veles and Prilep to Bulgaria and allow Salonica to Greece. The country which owns the interior must have the control of the coast, since no lasting settlement is possible that does not make the coast and the land behind in some way or other, parts of a whole.

As to Roumelia and Constantinople various plans have been suggested. It has been urged by some German and Austrian publicists that the best way to thwart Russia's southward movement would be to organize a Christian principality which would embrace the section in and about Constantinople. To some this plan appears very ingenious at first sight, but it is only necessary to reflect a little in order to discard it as impracticable, since it might become the bone of contention between the Balkan States. For the present, however, that seems to be the best thing that could be devised. When the people shall have reached a

higher degree of political development, a more satisfactory solution may be found, as we shall see presently.

The first prerequisite to an equitable disposition of the Eastern Question is that the great powers discontinue their meddlesome policy with reference to the Balkan States; that they give them sufficient time in which to make proper use of all the instruments of successful statecraft; then, and only then, we may look for peace and progress in the Levant.



CHAPTER II.

FUSION OF KINDRED NATIONALITIES.

A FEW years of free and independent existence will suffice to bring about the second stage in the process of political development; this consists first in the union of all southern Slavs into one powerful state. The beginning has already been made in the league formed between Servia and Bulgaria for mutual protection. Once hostile to each other, they have now formed a defensive and offensive alliance, in conjunction with Montenegro. Why not suppose that, ere many years have passed by, public sentiment will have been created favoring the organization of a strong South Slavonic federation. Indeed, this has been the ideal of the most enlightened people in the peninsula: speaking practically the same language, they could gradually amalgamate into one state. What they need above all things is a deep-rooted conviction that they have a community of interests and that on economic grounds, as well as on others, it would be to their advantage to fuse into

one state. The dynastic question might present some difficulty, but the masterly way in which the Balkan nations have dealt with questions of this character, will dispel further fear in this direction. It is somewhat unfortunate that the Croats do not use the cyrillic alphabet, for then their fusion with Servia would become much easier, and would facilitate literary communication among all the Yougo Slavs or Southern Slavs. The spread of education will in due time obliterate many of the differences that now seem insurmountable. The idea of a Yougo-Slavonic federation was also in the mind of Prince Bismark, whose policy it has been to detach Austria from her present relationship and join her to the German Empire, favoring at the same time the establishment of a strong Yougo-Slavonic state with Constantinople for its capital. This policy still dominates the German foreign office, its object being to create a counterpoise to Russia. Such a combination is by no means difficult now that it is quite certain that neither Croatia nor Slavonia would care to be blended with Hungary.

Nor would the Bulgarians in Macedonia be amalgamated with Greece. Therefore, there is a strong probability that the Southern Slavs may be

induced to unite and live happily under the same government.

On the same ground there is no reason why Greek communities may not unite under one rule. The Pan-Hellenic movement is to be commended whenever it seeks to bring together the Greek people. The late Greco-Turkish war had its beginning in a strong desire on the part of the Cretans to unite themselves to the Greek state. It is a justifiable demand, because the large majority of the Creten people insist on such a union with Greece. But it does not seem right for the Greeks to claim a whole province simply because a given city within its borders happens to be Greek in its sympathies, as is the case in Macedonia. If, instead of propagating Hellenism among the Bulgarians, who have a fixed national character, the Greeks had centered their propaganda in Albania, their efforts might have been crowned with greater success. But now it is too late to turn the Albanians into Greeks; there is no reason, however, why they could not join hands under the same government; especially as in the event of a Yougo-Slavonic understanding, it might prove to be the most expedient thing that they could do. We have thus discussed the second stage of the evolutionary process in the political development of the Balkan States.

CHAPTER III.

BALKAN CONFEDERATION.

WE have assumed from the beginning that no foreign intervention should be tolerated, if a proper and orderly development of the Balkan States be desired. Liberty, once assured, in course of time, it would be apt to cement friendly ties between these different peoples. Moreover, they would soon be enabled to see the defects of their government and would gladly co-operate in its re-organization. They would begin to feel the crying need of a united stand in their relation with foreign powers. This transition into a stronger bond we may designate as the Balkan Confederation. "Confederate government," according to Prof. Burgess, "is the form in which as to territory and population, the state is co-extensive in its own organization with the organization of the local governments." We may, therefore, apply this principle in the formation of the Balkan Confederation. Let each state retain the control of its own local government and refer all questions of common interest to a central

government, composed of representatives of all the states entering into the Confederation. This is what was done in the United States at the time of the adoption of the federal form of government.

Signor Crispi, the Italian ex-Premier, expressed a desire to see a confederation of Roumania, Bulgaria, Servia, Greece and Montenegro with Constantinople for its capital, as the best solution of the Eastern Question. Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal party in England have often urged the advisability of a Balkan Confederation. The same view has been held by Premier Titza in the Hungarian parliament.

The idea of a Balkan Confederation as the best solution of the question, will be approved by all who have the welfare of the Balkan people at heart. It all depends upon the attitude of the European powers and the individual action of each one of the Balkan States that are immediately concerned in the Confederation. Russia will, of course, do everything in her power to discourage such an understanding among these people. Austria Hungary, although somewhat tempted to encroach upon Macedonia, would cheerfully consent to the formation of an Oriental Confederacy, which would be in a position to withstand all outside pressure.

No one will doubt that the remaining powers

of the European concert would welcome a confederation of the Balkan States and thereby put an effectual blockade to Russia's selfish aspirations in the peninsula.

It remains to be seen how far the Balkan States are prepared to enter into a political organization which would give all nationalities equal prerogatives. It is to be hoped that the Greeks, Bulgarians, Servians and Roumanians will realize the importance of such a confederate league. A few years ago, representative men from Greece visited the capitals of all the Balkan states with a view of generating a sentiment that would be favorable to such a confederation. This would indicate that the Greeks are ready for any action which looks to a political union between the different states, now struggling for existence. It is also true that the Bulgarians have no desire to spread their dominions beyond the limits of their own nationality, and would heartily co-operate with the rest of the Balkan nationalities for a speedy solution of the question. The same may be said of the Roumanians. Unfortunately for the people of the peninsula, the Servians have heretofore shown great reluctance to join in such an organization, claiming that the balance of power between the Balkan states must be established before any such arrangement is agreed

upon. It was on this ground that they attacked Bulgaria twelve years ago, with such disastrous results to their national prestige. But even the Servians begin to realize that the principle of the balance of power, which they have borrowed from the disputes of the greater nations, has no real foundation whatever.

In Europe small states are seen side by side with larger ones, without there being any infringement upon each other's rights.

The formation of a Balkan League is essential to the preservation of the Balkan States. Otherwise, sooner or later, they will become a prey to the greater powers that surround them. Even the Servians begin to understand how important it is to unite against the common enemy, if they are to retain their independence.

However, as there is a large proportion of people inhabiting the peninsula, who are of different races and religions and may cause frequent disturbances, it will be best to adopt the Swiss system of government, where half cantons retain the right of self-government on the same basis as the larger ones. Had this understanding been reached earlier, Greece would have had the active support of the other Balkan States in her late war with the "unspeakable Turk." It has been said that experience is the best teacher, and it is par-

ticularly true in this case, for it will be the most effective way to force, upon the minds of the people in the East, the necessity for an amicable understanding.

The day is coming when these states must organize the long-expected Confederation, if they do not wish to succumb to the insatiable greed of some great power. Then only, we may hear of the Balkan peninsula, once the garden of the world and the center of civilization, entering upon a new era of freedom and prosperity. That this day may soon dawn upon the political horizon of these much afflicted nations should be the wish of all freedom-loving and progressive people.



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